

2025



AP[®] World History: Modern

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

Inside:

Short-Answer Question 3

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

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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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 Identify one development that contributed to the spread of gunpowder technologies in the period before circa 1500. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- The Mongol conquests contributed to the spread of gunpowder technologies.
- Warfare between states led to the spread of gunpowder technologies.
- Some states employed foreign military specialists who could train their forces in how to use new types of cannons and other gunpowder weapons.
- Gunpowder technologies spread along trade routes, such as the Silk Road and the Indian Ocean.

B Explain one way the use of military technologies affected the development of land-based empires in the period circa 1450 to 1750. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Muslim empires such as the Ottomans and Mughals used armed trade and gunpowder to expand their territories by conquering weaker neighboring states.
 - Some European states were able to create overseas empires by using cannons and other gunpowder weapons against the technologically less developed societies they encountered.
 - Many states were able to use gunpowder weapons to eliminate or reduce challenges to their authority from the nobility, for example by building or expanding their professional armies.
-

C Explain one way navigational technologies contributed to economic change in the period circa 1450 to 1750. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Improved compass designs enabled Europeans to sail to the Americas, eventually creating the Atlantic system of trade.
 - Knowledge of seasonal monsoon winds allowed European states to establish trading-post empires in the Indian Ocean.
 - Improved astrolabes and better mapmaking techniques facilitated European exploration of the African coast, which led them to set up trading posts on the continent.
-

a. A development that contributed to the spread of gunpowder technologies before 1500 was the establishment and growth of the Mongol Empire. The Mongol Empire spanned a large portion of Eurasia, which created safer and more uniform trade routes, due to the entire path being ruled by the same group of people. Mongols also established caravanseri, which were rest stops for merchants that made travelling easier. So, since trade on the Silk Roads became safer and more convenient, it increased under Mongol rule, and gunpowder, which was originally produced in China, was diffused in this improved trade system.

b. In the period 1450-1750, the use of new military technologies, such as gunpowder weapons, allowed for land-based empires to take over more land, and develop into larger empires. Gunpowder weapons and explosives were an advantage in a world when most armies fought with swords on horseback. Cannons could knock down walls of opposing kingdoms, and allowed for the land-based empires to overpower these regions, threatening them to join their empire, and growing the land-based empire. An example of this is the Ottoman Empire. Ottomans used gunpowder weapons to attack the city of Constantinople, the capitol of the Byzantine Empire, rename it Istanbul, claim it as their capitol, and grow their empire.

c. Navigational technologies, such as the compass, allowed for Europeans to navigate to the Americas in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. This led to economic change because discovery of the New World provided Europeans with raw materials, and allowed for the system of mercantalism in the Americas. Mercantalism contributed to economic change because it created a closed market in which colonies were forced to trade with their mother nation, and since the mother nation had no competition with other nations for trade, they could set prices as they wanted, which was a new economic system, and caused economical change in this time period.

A) A development that contributed to the spread of gunpowder is the British East India Company attempting to supply their Indian troops with new guns that went against their culture and values. This led to the Sepoy Rebellion since the Hindus didn't want to use the new guns.

B) Land based empires were able to expand due to military technologies like gunpowder. For example, the Ottoman Empire used gunpowder to expand and conquer other territories.

C) Navigational technologies like the compass contributed to economic trade such as the establishment of the Columbian Exchange. European explorers, like Christopher Columbus, used the compass to travel across the Atlantic Ocean and reach the New World. Once discovered, trade between the New World and the Old World was established. The New World supplied the Old World with raw materials and the Old World supplied the New World with the finished products from their factories.

- A) One development that contributed to the spread of gunpowder technologies in the period before circa 1500 would be the development of paper money and commercial networks in Song China such as the Grand Canal.
- B) One way the use of military technologies affected the developments of land-based empires in the period circa 1450 to 1750 would be weapons affecting the government and construction.
- C) One way navigational technologies contributed to economic change in the period circa 1450 to 1750 would be the compass and use of ships that assisted the discovery of nearby islands and land that contributed to the economic change such as growth in land space and crop growth by Christopher Columbus, which later then resulted in political issues.

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 earned 1 point for Part A because it correctly identifies the Mongol Empire's protection of the Silk Roads as a development that contributed to the spread of gunpowder technologies.

The response earned 1 point for Part B because it explains how the use of new military technologies like gunpowder weaponry, including cannon, affected the development of land-based empires by enabling the Ottoman Empire to expand its territories.

The response earned 1 point for Part C because it explains how the use of navigational technologies like the compass helped the Europeans travel to the Americas, allowing them to extract raw materials and establish mercantilist trade with new colonies, contributing to economic change.

Sample: 3B

SAQ Part A Score: 0

SAQ Part B Score: 1

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Total Score: 2

The response did not earn the point for Part A because it does not identify one development that contributed to the spread of gunpowder technologies in the period before circa 1500. The creation of British East India Company and the Sepoy Rebellion are developments that occur after 1500.

The response earned 1 point for Part B because it discusses how the use of military technologies such as gunpowder enabled the expansion of land-based empires such as the Ottoman Empire.

The response earned 1 point for Part C because it explains how navigational technologies like the compass allowed European explorers to travel across the Atlantic Ocean, leading to transatlantic trade and the Columbian Exchange, both of which contributed to economic change.

Short Answer Question 3 (continued)

Sample: 3C

SAQ Part A Score: 0

SAQ Part B Score: 0

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Total Score: 1

The response did not earn the point for Part A because it does not correctly identify a development that contributed to the spread of gunpowder technologies in the period before circa 1500.

The response did not earn the point for Part B because it does not correctly explain a way that the use of military technologies affected the development of land-based empires.

The response earned 1 point for Part C because it explains how the navigational technology of the compass assisted in the discovery of new lands, which led to territorial expansion and increased production of crops. The attribution of increase in crop production to Columbus is incorrect, but “growth in land space” and “crop growth” connected to the use of the compass are specific enough to complete the task of explaining how navigational technologies contributed to economic change.