

2026



AP[®] World History: Modern

Free-Response Questions

WORLD HISTORY: MODERN
SECTION I PART B
TIME – 40 MINUTES

Directions:

Section I, Part B has 3 short-answer questions and lasts 40 minutes.

In this part, answer Question 1 and Question 2 and **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

In your responses, be sure to address **all** parts of the questions you answer. Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

You may pace yourself as you answer the questions in this part, or you may use these optional timing recommendations:

It is suggested that you spend an equal amount of time, approximately 13 minutes, on each question.

You may use scratch paper for notes and planning, but credit will only be given for responses entered in this application. Text you enter as an annotation will not be included as part of your answer. You can go back and forth between questions in this part until time expires. The clock will turn red when 5 minutes remain—**the proctor will not give you any time updates or warnings.**

Note: This exam was originally administered digitally. It is presented here in a format optimized for teacher and student use in the classroom.

“In the year 1324 CE, a memorable event took place in Cairo. Mansa Musa, ruler of the [West African] empire of Mali, stopped there for three days during a pilgrimage to...Mecca. Cairo at this time was an extremely sophisticated metropolis, and its inhabitants would not ordinarily have paid much attention to foreign travelers. But Mansa Musa was so wealthy...that his expenditures of gold and his conversations with local notables were recorded in great detail. The story of Mansa Musa tells a good deal about the role of the Sahara in world history. First, it shows that by the fourteenth century CE the great desert could be safely crossed, even by a mighty king carrying precious goods and accompanied by a large body of followers. Second, it indicates that the lands to the south of the Sahara were...organized into large states and that at least some of their inhabitants had become pious Muslims. Finally, it tells us something about the economic basis for more regular trans-Saharan travel, as [West African] gold was of great value for both the Islamic world and Christian Europe during the late Middle Ages.”

Source: Ralph A. Austen, United States historian of Africa, *Trans-Saharan Africa in World History*, book published in 2010

1. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A. Describe one likely reason for Mansa Musa’s journey to Cairo and Mecca.
- B. Describe one piece of evidence not found in the passage that could be used to support a claim made by the author in the second paragraph.
- C. Using a specific example, explain how long-distance trade routes affected the societies they connected in the period 1200 to 1450.

“The inhabitants of India, as far as I have been able to see, have very little interest in learning about divine things. Sir, you know very well what a hard business it is to teach people who do not have any knowledge of God to give up their sinful habits. They dislike it so much, that it is most difficult to get them to hear us if we begin to preach about it, and they think it like death to be asked to become Christians.

Certainly, if the Portuguese were kinder to new converts [to Christianity], a greater number would convert, but, as things stand, the Indians see that converts are despised and looked down upon by the Portuguese, so it is natural they are unwilling to become converts themselves.

For all these reasons there is no longer need for me to labor in India. But I have learned that there is a country near China called Japan which has been untouched by Jewish or Muslim teachings and whose inhabitants are very eager to learn what they do not know about things divine and things natural. I am determined to go there as soon as I can.”

Source: Francis Xavier, Spanish Jesuit missionary in India, letter to the leader of the Catholic Jesuit order, 1549

2. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A. Describe one technology that allowed Europeans in the period circa 1450 to 1750 to travel to the regions mentioned in the passage.
- B. Describe one example (from any world region) that would support the author’s claim in the second paragraph about European treatment of Indigenous peoples.
- C. Explain how missionary activities by religious figures such as Francis Xavier were challenged during the period 1450 to 1850.

Answer either Question 3 or Question 4.

3. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A. Describe one geographic or environmental characteristic of the Indian Ocean trade network in the period circa 1200 to 1450.
 - B. Explain how technological or economic developments contributed to the growth of trade in the Indian Ocean in the period circa 1200 to 1450.
 - C. Explain how the growth of trade in the Indian Ocean affected states or societies in the period circa 1200 to 1450.
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4. Respond to parts A, B, and C.

- A. Describe one change in global trade during the period circa 1750 to 1914.
- B. Explain how economic or political developments in Europe shaped global trade during the period circa 1750 to 1914.
- C. Explain how global trade affected non-European states or societies during the period circa 1750 to 1914.

END OF SECTION I

WORLD HISTORY: MODERN
SECTION II
TIME – 1 HOUR AND 40 MINUTES

Directions:

Section II has 1 document-based question (DBQ) and 1 long essay question, and lasts 1 hour and 40 minutes.

In this section, answer Question 1 (DBQ) and **either** Question 2 **or** Question 3 **or** Question 4. After reviewing Questions 2, 3, and 4, choose the question that you are best prepared to answer. This section of the exam requires answers in essay form. Use complete sentences; an outline or bulleted list alone is not acceptable.

You may pace yourself as you answer the questions in this section, or you may use these optional timing recommendations:

For Question 1 (DBQ), it is suggested that you spend approximately 15 minutes reading the question and planning your answer, and then 45 minutes writing your essay. The suggested writing time for the long essay question is 40 minutes.

You may use scratch paper for notes and planning, but credit will only be given for responses entered in this application. Text you enter as an annotation will **not** be included as part of your answer. You can go back and forth between questions in this section until time expires. The clock will turn red when 5 minutes remain—**the proctor will not give you any time updates or warnings.**

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1. Evaluate the extent to which military conflicts in the twentieth century changed the role of women in society.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least four documents.
- Use at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.
- For at least two documents, explain how or why the document’s point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.
- Demonstrate a complex understanding of a historical development related to the prompt through sophisticated argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.

Document 1

Source: Yuan Luanyu, Chinese villager, interview with a Chinese historian for an oral history project on the 1899 to 1901 Boxer Rebellion, 1960

“Miss Han was about twenty-five years old. It was said that she was a Shining Red Lantern.¹ She could fight with spears or a sword. They said she had magic powers—if she were to sit on a bench, it would become a horse so she could ride away, and if she were to sit on a mat, it would become a cloud so she could fly away.

Miss Han was invited to our village by the leader of the Big Knife Society² in our district. She rode in on a big horse with about a dozen of her followers. Since there was a big drought that year and people did not have enough to eat, she asked the rich families to provide wheat to make steamed buns for the poor. She also set up a ‘Righteous Gruel Station’ for sharing food. Within a few days four or five thousand Big Knife Society members came into town. But Miss Han remained the leader of all. She sent people to confiscate everything from the churches in nearby villages.

Then there was a big rainstorm, and they all went home because they were all farmers. Later, we heard that Miss Han was caught by her father and elder brother. They beat her to death for her disobedience in leaving the household.”

“Four Accounts of the Fate of Miss Han (Han Guniang)”, from *THE SEARCH FOR MODERN CHINA, A DOCUMENTARY COLLECTION* by Pei Kai Cheng, Michael Lestz and Jonathan Spence. Copyright © 1999 by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. Used by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc

1: term for Chinese women who joined the Boxer Rebellion

2: one of the Chinese peasant groups that participated in the Boxer Rebellion

Document 2

Source: Lady Frances Balfour, British women's rights activist, an article written for a collection of articles and editorials by British and Indian authors in support of India's contribution to the British war effort, India, 1915

“And the women of India? They, too, are doing what they can, though their work consists for the present in the sewing of shirts and sending gifts of chocolate and money for the soldiers. The women of Bombay alone have collected about 250,000 rupees in cash for the [British] War Fund. Elsewhere, we hear that Indian women from [the region of] Bengal have offered their jewelry for the cause of the Empire. No one but an Indian can understand how great must be the devotion that can prompt such a loyal deed. For the men of India know to their cost how passionately fond their women are of jewelry which is also their savings bank.”

Document 3

Source: Strike committee of women workers from a Russian textile factory that produced soldiers' uniforms, proclamation to Russian soldiers, 1915

“To the Russian soldiers from Russian women:

Soldiers! We are asking for your help. Defend us. Like you, our fathers, sons, and husbands were taken and sent to the war, while we, defenseless and unarmed, are being shot by police guards just because we asked for better pay. There is nobody to defend us.

The factory bosses say: work calmly, but we are tired and hungry, and we cannot work. We asked but were not heard; we began to demand [by going on strike], and they shot at us. They say there is no bread. Well, where is it then?

Soldiers! Teach us, help us! We have no male relatives left here.”

Document 4

Source: “The Parisian Woman Worker—Before the War / During the War,” cover illustration of *Le Petit Journal*, a French newspaper, Paris, November 1916



Chronicle / Alamy Stock Photo

The figure in the upper left portion of the image represents a woman working in a Parisian flower shop before the war; the figure in the lower right portion of the image represents the same woman working in a munitions factory during the war.

Document 5

Source: Margarita Robles de Mendoza, Mexican women's rights activist, *The Evolution of the Mexican Woman*, book published in 1931

"Feminism does not propose to yank women from the home. Rather, it seeks to prove that... better women will make better mothers.

That is why we look to the *soldadera*¹ as the ideal of Mexican feminism, precisely because she is the one who most has shared in the life of her man. She has faithfully followed in his footsteps in battle, and by his side she has sung victory songs, and cried with grief in defeat. Wife, friend, battle comrade, partner, all this she has been for her man, and this is exactly what feminism wants all women to be, whatever their level of culture or social position may be. The *soldaderas* have shown that equal rights for men and women make their responsibilities equivalent and equalize their participation in all matters pertaining to their common life."

1: The term refers to the many women who actively participated in military conflicts in Mexico during the first half of the twentieth century.

Document 6

Source: Muthoni Kirima, Kenyan woman, interview about the 1952 to 1960 Mau Mau uprising, a revolt against British colonial rule in Kenya, 2019

"I had witnessed how the White man oppressed our people and when the time came for us to go to the forest, I was at the forefront. Together with my husband...we joined the other Mau Mau fighters in the forest.

It is women who made us win this war. The women did more than fight physically. A woman is very important in society but, sadly, her role is always overlooked. As a woman, your value is immeasurable.

I remember when the war broke out in 1952, one man said that the men should not tell the women. However, another man overruled him and said they would not leave the women behind.

I would deliver messages and food to the fighters. I then learnt how to fight while in the forest.

We got back to 'civilization' on December 12, 1963, having spent 11 years fighting in the forest. When we met with Jomo Kenyatta,¹ there was a promise to reward those who had fought. Sadly, until today, no one bothers to know where we are or how we survive."

Soni Kanake, "I do not regret fighting for this country: Muthoni Kirima," interview with Muthoni Kirima, *Daily Nation*, Kenya, 2019

1: anti-colonial activist who became the first postcolonial prime minister of Kenya

Document 7

Source: Anonymous Soviet woman, interview with a journalist recalling her experiences serving as an army nurse during the 1979 to 1989 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, interview published in 1990

“I came home in 1984.

‘Do you think we should be out there?’ I was asked by a boy I knew.

‘If we weren’t, the Americans would be!’ I answered furiously. As if that had anything to do with it!

The truth is that at the time we thought about such questions amazingly little.

All we saw were our wounded, mutilated, or horribly burned patients, and we learned how to hate, not how to think. I’d look out of the helicopter and see the mountains of Afghanistan covered with poppies and other flowers and I’d realize I no longer loved that beauty. Instead, in the summer, with its scorching heat, I’d look at the empty, dry earth with a kind of spiteful pleasure. ‘That’s what you deserve! We are suffering and being killed because of you!’

With the other nurses, I spent my spare time unravelling the thread from parachute shroud-lines and sterilizing it ready for stitching up wounds. There were shortages of everything.... At night, we’d sit together preparing cotton balls and washing and drying the used gauze bandages so they could be used again. We were one big family, and we guessed, even then, that when we got home, we’d be a lost and unwanted generation.

When I got back home, I wanted to have a baby, wash diapers and listen to babytalk. The doctors advised against it. ‘Your heart can’t take the strain [of a pregnancy],’ they said—and I did actually have a heart attack before giving birth to my baby girl. ‘No one accepts that our poor health is the result of Afghanistan,’ a friend wrote to me. ‘They think that if we weren’t wounded, we weren’t affected.’”

Answer Question 2 or Question 3 or Question 4.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least two pieces of specific and relevant evidence.
- Use historical reasoning (e.g., comparison, causation, continuity or change over time) to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.
- Demonstrate a complex understanding of a historical development related to the prompt through sophisticated argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.

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2. In the period circa 1200 to 1600, technological innovations, migrations of people, and the expansion and contraction of religions intensified military conflicts and resulted in numerous wars of conquest.

Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which military conflicts affected state building in Afro-Eurasia during the period 1200 to 1600.

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3. In the period circa 1600 to 1900, demographic, economic, and political factors led to large-scale migrations of people both within and across states, regions, and continents, including voluntary and involuntary migration flows.

Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which migration of people in the period circa 1600 to 1900 led to social and/or cultural change.

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4. During the twentieth century, individuals, groups, and states organized anti-war movements, created international organizations, and adopted peacemaking policies in order to further peace and avoid future conflicts.

Develop an argument that evaluates the extent to which efforts to promote peace and/or avoid international conflict during the twentieth century were successful.

STOP
END OF EXAM