

Chief Reader Report on Student Responses: 2019 AP[®] European History Free-Response Questions

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|-----------------------------|---------|------------|--------|------|
| • Number of Students Scored | 100,655 | | | |
| • Number of Readers | 537 | | | |
| • Score Distribution | | Exam Score | N | %At |
| | | 5 | 11,797 | 11.7 |
| | | 4 | 20,604 | 20.5 |
| | | 3 | 26,088 | 25.9 |
| | | 2 | 29,568 | 29.4 |
| | | 1 | 12,598 | 12.5 |
| • Global Mean | 2.90 | | | |

The following comments on the 2019 free-response questions for AP[®] European History were written by the Chief Reader, Jennifer McNabb, University of Northern Iowa. They give an overview of each free-response question and of how students performed on the question, including typical student errors. General comments regarding the skills and content that students frequently have the most problems with are included. Some suggestions for improving student preparation in these areas are also provided. Teachers are encouraged to attend a College Board workshop to learn strategies for improving student performance in specific areas.

Question # 1**Task:** SAQ**Topic:** Russian Revolution Secondary Source**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.10***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

a) Describe one piece of evidence that would support the author’s characterization of Russia’s political culture prior to the Bolshevik Revolution.

Responses were expected to describe one piece of evidence from Russian history that would support the passage’s characterization of Russia’s political culture prior to the Bolshevik Revolution as driven by top-down authoritarian measures that did not acknowledge popular will. This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework in Unit 3, Key Concepts 2.1.I.E (Peter the Great and Catherine the Great) and Key Concept 1.5.III.B (monarchies and nobles); Unit 6, Key Concept 3.4.II.D (the period from the emancipation of the serfs to the Russian Revolution of 1905); and in Topic 8.3, especially by Key Concepts 4.2.I.A and 4.2.I.B (covering the reign of Nicholas II and the Provisional Government of 1917).

b) Describe one piece of evidence that would support the author’s interpretation of Russia’s “new autocracy” in the 1920s and 1930s.

Responses were expected to describe one piece of evidence that would support the passage’s interpretation of Russia’s “new autocracy” in the 1920s and 1930s as possessing a similarity to or continuity with the tsarist regime. This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework in Topic 8.3, particularly by Key Concepts 4.2.I.B and 4.2.I.C, on the establishment of a communist state and its early development.

c) Describe one piece of evidence that would undermine the author’s argument in the passage that the “new autocracy” in Russia resembled the old.

Responses were expected to describe one piece of evidence that would undermine the author’s argument in the passage that the “new autocracy” in Russia resembled the old by identifying a contrast between the tsarist and Communist regimes. This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework in Topic 8.3, particularly by Key Concept 4.2.I.D.i (Lenin’s New Economic Policy) and in Topic 8.6, especially by Key Concepts 4.2.I.D.ii and 4.2.I.E (Stalin’s modernization program).

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In Part A, responses were expected to demonstrate an effective understanding of Russian political culture “prior to the Bolshevik Revolution,” which may be interpreted as any period in Russian history from the foundation of the Kievan Rus to the months immediately preceding the Revolution. “Describe” was intended to cue students to the need to go beyond a mere mention of an aspect of Russian political culture that would support the author’s characterization in the passage. The bulk of acceptable responses to this part offered evidence from the reign of Nicholas II (1894–1917) or the Provisional Government of 1917.

In Part B, responses were expected to offer a piece of evidence to support Figes’s interpretation of Russian political life in the 1920s and 1930s. Acceptable responses drew attention to the violent tactics of the Tsarist and Communist regimes, and the best ones underscored the resemblance of the secret police organizations that operated in both periods. Many other responses described dictatorship itself as a continuity between the Tsarist and Communist periods, with some providing details concerning decision-making by a leader and a group of advisors. Comparison and continuity and change over time were reasoning skills showcased here.

Because the task of the prompt in Part B was to “undermine” Figes’s argument, responses had to identify a difference between the Tsarist and Communist regimes. Successful responses most often contrasted the Communists’ intervention

in the economy with the absence of centralized economic planning displayed by the Tsarist government, while others underscored the widely divergent ideological bases of the regimes. Some of the best responses focused on the struggles for power that followed a leader’s death, and others described decision-making by a council such as the plitburo as a departure from policy directives issued by monarchs and their court advisors. Effective responses demonstrated the ability to read carefully to identify the author’s argument and to employ historical reasoning drawing on course content to provide support for a contrasting interpretation.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses failed to connect the behavior of a specific Tsar with the thwarting of a democratic culture in Russia. | <p>“After centuries of begging the tsar for more say, Tsar Nicholas II finally gave the Russian people a representation. But the hope for democracy in Russia fell flat as Tsar Nicholas exerted his power and control over the Duma, not allowing for any real democracy to take root.” <i>(This response successfully connects specific historical evidence with the stymying of democratic reforms.)</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses claimed that the serfs were emancipated by the Bolsheviks, and they misconstrued the new autocracy’s economic policies. | <p>“The ‘new autocracy’ claim can be undermined by the fact that under the socialist regime, Stalin’s policy of collectivization, unlike the traditional Russian government did in preserving aristocratic privilege, punished wealthy Russian landowners, the kulaks, and forced land to be publicly shared among social classes.” <i>(Effective responses like this one demonstrated an understanding of the economic policies of the 1920s and 1930s.)</i></p> |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should introduce students to the format of the Short Answer Question early in the academic year and remind them to read stimulus material carefully in preparation for answering all elements of the prompt. Students should learn that mastery of the historical thinking skills required for the Short Answer Question will assist them in constructing effective responses to other historical writing exercises, including the DBQ and LEQ.
- Teachers need to familiarize students with common words used in prompts, i.e.: describe, explain, undermine, refute.
- Teachers should give students frequent practice reading secondary sources containing broad arguments like those contained in Figes’s passage. Specifically, they should teach students to analyze stimulus material by distinguishing between general assertions and supporting evidence (if present) and to supply supporting evidence from their own knowledge of the particular topic.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- A rich, new collection of resources is available to teachers for the 2019 school year that includes newly created formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course and that represent each of the types of questions on the AP Exam. This includes practice SAQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces beginning with scaffolded questions that represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and an increased challenge as teacher's progress through the course.
- Teachers will find lessons on teaching the historical skill of secondary source analysis in the Teaching and Assessing Modules, found on AP Central and linked on AP Classroom. The modules include examples of secondary source analysis SAQs connected to different, specific content areas. The modules contain lessons that address analyzing historical evidence, videos explaining instructions for this skill, and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks with this skill focus.
- The Teaching and Assessing Modules also contain resources focused specifically on scoring responses that include secondary source analysis using the AP European History scoring rubric. The focus on assessment found in the Teaching and Assessing Module entitled *Interpreting the French Revolution*, for example, offers insight into how to address assessing source analysis. This includes examples and commentary on what earned points and what did not for tasks whose primary focus is source analysis.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.
- The instructional approaches section of the 2019 AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that address each of the specific skills needed for the course. The section beginning on page 222 specifically addresses the practice of source analysis and provides suggestions for instruction.

Question # 2**Task:** SAQ 2**Topic:** French Revolution Image**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.28***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

a) Describe one way in which the image expresses ideas popularized during the Enlightenment.

Responses were expected to offer an accurate description of the connection between the French Revolutionary ideas depicted in the image (i.e., “Liberty armed with Reason striking down Ignorance and Fanaticism”) and Enlightenment ideas such as reason, rationality, and liberty. These concepts are addressed in the curriculum framework in Topics 4.3 (The Enlightenment); 4.6 (Enlightened and Other Approaches to Power); 4.7 (Causation in the Age of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment); and 5.4 (The French Revolution).

b) Describe one way in which the image reflects the policies of the French Revolutionary government’s radical phase.

Responses were expected to connect the ideas depicted in the image to specific policies of the French revolutionary government’s radical phase (1792–1794). This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework in Topics 4.3 (The Enlightenment) and 5.4 (The French Revolution, specifically by Key Concept 2.1.IV.C).

c) Describe one way in which the ideas in the image continued to influence European political thought after 1815.

Responses were expected to connect ideas from either the Enlightenment or the radical phase of the French Revolution to European political thought after 1815, including such developments as conservative reactions against revolutionary movements and liberalism after the Congress of Vienna or the influence of ideas about liberty and democracy on the revolutionary movement in 1848.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In Part A, responses were generally successful in making connections (Historical Thinking Skill 5A) between the ideas in the image and Enlightenment ideas. Most could at least implicitly offer an interpretation of how the image represented ideas from the Enlightenment, often emphasizing the conflict between the emerging authority of reason and older ways of thinking (represented by “ignorance and fanaticism” in the image). The most successful responses described specific philosophes (e.g., Voltaire, Locke, Rousseau) or ideas that emerged during the Enlightenment (e.g., reason, rationality, liberty) and how they sought to challenge older ideas (e.g., religion or the influence of the Catholic Church).

In Part B, responses were expected to show an understanding of how a relevant context influenced a specific historical development or process in connecting the ideas in the image to specific policies of the French Revolutionary government’s radical phase. While most responses could successfully distinguish the radical phase (1792–1794) from the earlier liberal phase of the revolution, not all could identify specific policies of the revolutionary government and instead made vague references to the revolutionary violence of the radical phase. Others were unable to distinguish between the liberal and radical phases and described events such as the Tennis Court Oath, which did not correctly address the question prompt. The other major challenge was to connect the radical phase of the revolution to the ideas in the image, and while many responses successfully described specific policies of the radical phase of the revolution, they could not earn the point without at least an implicit reference to the ideas in the image (such as a reference to reason or liberty).

In Part C, responses were expected to link the ideas in the image to post-1815 political thought, again emphasizing the skill of making connections. Some successful responses described conservatism and Metternich’s crackdown on revolutionary movements and liberalism as a reaction against Enlightenment ideas and the French Revolution, while others described how the revolutionary movements across Europe in 1848 took inspiration from ideas of liberty and democracy that emerged from the French Revolution. Responses that did not earn the point tended to describe post-1815

intellectual or artistic movements or even scientific achievements that drew inspiration from the Enlightenment without connecting them to political thought.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In all three parts of the question, but especially in parts A and B, students struggled to successfully interpret the image in a historical context, according to the instructions of the question prompt. Many students simply described the image using the terms from the image caption or attempted an art-historical or stylistic analysis rather than interpreting the image as a representation of Enlightenment ideas or radical French Revolutionary values. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The image represents the Enlightenment’s emphasis on reason. The scepter of reason strikes down ignorance, representing the Enlightenment belief that reason is superior to pure religious faith.” “The image reflects the French Revolutionary government’s deification of reason during its radical phase. The scepter of reason with an eye in the center reflects the Goddess of Reason popularized during the Festival of the Supreme Being.” (Effective responses like these offered successful interpretations of the image by linking the image with specific Enlightenment ideals or revolutionary policies.) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part C was especially challenging for students because many seemed to lack specific content knowledge about 19th-century political thought and specifically about how the Enlightenment and French Revolution influenced 19th-century ideologies (especially conservatism and liberalism) and the Revolutions of 1830 and 1848. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The ideas in the image continued to influence European political thought after 1815 as liberal motives inspired revolutions and calls for new independent states. In 1848, revolutions sparked in nations such as Germany and Austria because of liberal and national thought. Also, reason caused people to make more educated reforms that help the government and society such as public education.” (<i>This response indicates an understanding of the long-term influence of specific ideals depicted in the image on subsequent historical processes and developments.</i>) |

Based on your experience at the AP[®] Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should introduce students to a broad range of primary sources, including visual evidence, throughout the course.

- Teachers should instruct students on how to interpret different types of images (including engravings, paintings, cartoons, and photographs) in class and encourage students to “read” images for their intended meaning and then to place that content into context.
- Teachers should stress that certain major events and tendencies in European history (such as the French Revolution) continued to exert significant influence past their defined “end dates.”

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Practice SAQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces beginning with scaffolded questions that represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and an increased challenge as teacher’s progress through the course. These are now available on AP Classroom as part of the collection of new resources for the 2019 school year. Specific question types and topics can be searched within the new collection of primary source practice SAQs and their accompanying scoring guidelines.
- Teachers will find lessons on teaching the historical disciplinary practice of source analysis in the Teaching and Assessing Modules, a link to which is found on AP Central. The module entitled *Interpreting the French Revolution* includes an example of a source analysis SAQ connected to specific content related to the French Revolution. This module contains specific lessons that address analyzing historical evidence, videos explaining instruction for this practice, and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks with this skill focus.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.
- The instructional approaches section of the AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that address each of the specific skills needed for the course. The section on pages 222–223 specifically addresses the skill of source analysis and provides suggestions for instruction.

Question # 3**Task:** SAQ 3**Topic:** English Reformation**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.61***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

a) Describe one cause of the Protestant Reformation in England during the reign of Henry VIII (1509–1547).

Responses were expected to demonstrate an understanding of the causes of the Reformation in England. This and the other two parts of this question relate to Unit 2 of the curriculum framework on the Age of Reformation, with this element focusing on Key Concept 1.5.

b) Describe one political effect of the Protestant Reformation in England in the period 1500–1600.

Responses were expected to demonstrate an understanding of the political effects of the Reformation, including the Act of Supremacy’s expansion of political power into the spiritual realm and the increased power of the monarch as derived from the economic profits from the dissolution of the monasteries. This portion of the prompt focuses on Topic 1.2, especially Key Concept 1.2.I and 1.2.II.

c) Explain one difference between political effects of the Protestant Reformation in England and political effects of the Protestant Reformation in France in the period 1500–1600.

Responses were expected to demonstrate the historical reasoning process of comparison by explaining a difference between the political effects of the religious reformations in England and France. This portion of the prompt focuses on Key Concept 1.2, especially sub-concept 1.2.III. Responses could also address Key Concept 1.2.III.A and Key Concept 1.2.III.D.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In Part A, responses demonstrated a high level of ability to address the course content related to this question and to apply the reasoning process of causation. Most described how Henry VIII’s desire for an annulment (often described as a “divorce”) of his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, with the hope of producing a male heir by another wife, led to a break with the Catholic Church for personal, rather than religious, reasons.

In Part B, responses focused on how the establishment of a new church in England had an internal or international political impact on the English state. Most identified how the monarchy’s new role in the Anglican Church extended its political power into the religious sphere. Several successful responses also noted how the increased economic power of the monarchy, which came from the sale of monastic properties, strengthened the power of the Tudors, or how individuals who continued to adhere to Catholicism lost political clout. Other successful responses discussed how the Protestant Reformation in England created some degree of political chaos when Henry’s children assumed the throne because of their varying religious beliefs.

In Part C, responses were expected to explain a clear difference in political effects of the Protestant Reformation in England and those in France, restricting those differences to the 16th century. The point was commonly achieved by one of the following explanations: There was a degree of toleration of Protestantism in France (because of the Edict of Nantes) but a lack of toleration of Catholicism by Protestant Tudors; there was a unity of church and state authority in England, whereas these were separate in France; England had an Anglican majority population, compared to a Catholic majority population and a Huguenot minority population in France; or the Protestant Reformation led to religious wars and a weakened monarchy in France, but England did not experience this type of large-scale religious conflict that challenged monarchical authority.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students sometimes asserted that the theological disputes behind the Protestant Reformation in Germany also drove the initial stages of Protestant Reformation in England, rather than being more of an after-effect of Henry’s break with Rome. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">“One cause of the Protestant Reformation in England was the refusal of the Catholic Church to grant Henry VIII a divorce so that he could get an heir. This caused him to break away from Catholicism and create the Anglican Church. England then felt a wave of Protestantism as it was supported by the monarch.” (<i>Effective responses like this one recognized the political and personal forces driving religious change in England.</i>) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students often described effects that were outside of the scope of time acceptable for the prompt. | Successful responses used specific, relevant historical evidence including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the Act of Supremacythe creation of the Book of Common Prayerthe “politiques”the Edict of Nantes |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should offer students regular opportunities to enhance their skill in the reasoning process of comparison. An exercise relevant to this course content could be to have students create two lists: one detailing the causes and effects of the Protestant Reformation in France and one detailing the causes and effects of the Protestant Reformation in England. They could then facilitate a discussion about the connection between politics and religion in those regions, fleshing out why the Reformation took different trajectories in each region and then expanding the discussion to other areas, including the Holy Roman Empire.
- Teachers should instruct students to understand both causes and effects of historical developments and processes. For this course content, teachers could have students create a timeline of events related to the Protestant Reformation to allow them to develop a better understanding of the connection between causes and effects, to recognize which effects were more immediate and which were more long-term, and to discern what caused the connection between religion and politics to evolve differently in European states.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Teachers will find lessons on teaching the historical reasoning process of causation in the Teaching and Assessing Modules found on AP Central. The module entitled *Analyzing Quantitative Sources: Causes of the Commercial and Agricultural Revolutions* is one of the modules that focuses on the reasoning process of causation. This module contains specific lessons that address causation, videos explaining causation in conjunction with course content and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks whose skill focus is causation.
- Additionally, the module entitled *Interaction of Europe and the World Over Time* contains an SAQ assessment and scoring explanation for an SAQ whose focus is causation.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.

- AP Classroom has a collection of newly created formative and summative assessment items, including practice SAQ questions that address similar skills and topics and that also have fully developed scoring guidelines.
- The Online Teacher Community is a good resource for teachers to seek additional feedback and support from peers by posting a question or comment in the discussion section or by checking what resources have already been posted in the “resources” tab on the Online Teacher Community.
- The instructional section of the AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that address each of the specific skills needed for the course. The section beginning on page 231 specifically addresses the historical reasoning processes and provides suggestions for instruction.

Question #4**Task:** SAQ**Topic:** Great Britain and Industrialization**Max. Points:** 3**Mean Score:** 1.99***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

a) Describe one cause of Great Britain's early industrialization in the period 1700–1800.

Responses were expected to demonstrate an understanding of factors that led to the industrialization of England. Responses could cite internal or external factors and could draw from political, economic, or social reasons and evidence. This content is addressed in the curriculum framework under Key Concept 2.2.II A, B, C, D, and E; Key Concept 2.4.IV.A; and Key Concept 3.1.I. A, B, and C.

b) Describe one effect of Great Britain's industrialization on the European balance of power in the period 1800–1900.

Responses were expected to describe how the consequences of industrialization affected the European balance of power during the 19th century. This content information is addressed in the curriculum framework under Key Concept 2.1.V.D; Key Concepts 3.1.II.C and 3.2.IV.A; Key Concept 3.4.II.A.D; and Key Concept 3.5.I.A.c.

c) Explain one political reaction to industrialization within Great Britain in the period 1800–1900.

Responses were expected to explain a political reaction within Great Britain, such as legislation and regulation of working conditions and the creation of unions that resulted from industrialization. This information is found in the curriculum framework under Key Concept 3.3.II.A, B, and C, Key Concept 3.3.III.A, B, and C.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In Part A, responses required the historical reasoning process of causation. Responses often described multiple factors that propelled industrialization in England, including specific natural resources within England and its colonies, geographic features, the stability of the English government, and the early advancements in agricultural and textile technology.

In Part B, responses again required the historical reasoning process of causation, and many were able to successfully recognize that power and dominance shifted toward industrialized nations. Responses acknowledged Britain's rise as a global power, its naval superiority, and the impact of imperialism, all of which upset the traditional European balance of power.

In Part C, responses were expected to explain one political reaction within Great Britain in response to working conditions that resulted from industrialization. Successful responses were able to draw on specific legislation such as the Mines Act or Factory Acts as well as workers' responses, such as unions or pushing for the expansion of suffrage. Some responses failed to explain a reaction within Great Britain or did not successfully explain the connection between a reaction and industrialization.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In part A, weaker responses often discussed inaccurate or vague causes of industrialization or described an effect of it, rather than a cause. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Great Britain was the first to industrialize in the period 1700–1800. One reason for this is that Great Britain had a lot of resources necessary for industrialization, such as coal and iron.” <i>(Effective responses like this one offered a specific cause of industrialization in the appropriate time period.)</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In part B, weaker responses often discussed Great Britain as a great economic or wealthy power without acknowledging the effect of this change on the balance of power. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Due to Great Britain’s increased productive output, the balance of power shifted greatly toward Britain as they built an expansive empire that included territories such as South Africa, Australia and the jewel in the crown of the British Empire, India.” <i>(Effective responses like this one displayed an ability to provide appropriate evidence and link that evidence to a shift in the balance of power.)</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In part C, responses often provided evidence to explain a reaction outside of Great Britain. In addition, weaker responses did not explain a specific political reaction. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The decrease in skilled labor that followed the mechanization of production led to the rise of liberal reformers that sought change in legislation. These reformers helped pass the Ten Hours Act (limiting work hours) and the Reform Act of 1830 which granted workers more rights.” <i>(Effective responses, like this one, provided specific, relevant political examples within Great Britain during the time period indicated in the prompt.)</i> |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should instruct students to understand course content within broader historical themes. This would assist with the selection of more accurate evidence when asked for a political or economic effect.
- Teachers should remind students to select evidence relevant to the time period stated in the prompt. Teachers could help students recognize pivotal dates and key events that mark the four time periods of the course.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Teachers will find lessons on teaching the historical reasoning process of causation in the Teaching and Assessing Modules found on AP Central. The module titled, *Analyzing Quantitative Sources: Causes of the Commercial and Agricultural Revolutions* is one of the modules that focuses on the reasoning process of causation. This module contains specific lessons that address causation, videos explaining causation in conjunction with course content and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks whose skill focus is causation.
- Additionally, the module entitled *Interaction of Europe and the World Over Time* contains an SAQ assessment and scoring explanation for an SAQ whose focus is causation.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.
- AP Classroom has a collection of newly created formative and summative assessment items, including practice SAQ questions that address similar skills and topics and that also have fully developed scoring guidelines.
- The Online Teacher Community is a good resource for teachers to seek additional feedback and support from peers, by posting a question or comment in the discussion section or by checking what resources have already been posted in the “resources” tab.
- The instructional section of the AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that address each of the specific skills needed for the course. The section beginning on page 231 specifically addresses historical reasoning processes and provides suggestions for instruction.

Question #1**Task:** DBQ**Topic:** Evaluate whether or not the Catholic Church in the 1600s was opposed to new ideas in science**Max. Points:** 7**Mean Score:** 3.26***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The Document-Based Question (DBQ) is designed to evaluate the degree to which students can analyze various types of historical documents in order to construct an essay that responds to the tasks required by the prompt. Responses were assessed on the extent to which they met seven requirements specified in the scoring guidelines. This particular DBQ asked students to evaluate whether or not the Catholic Church in the 1600s was opposed to new ideas in science. Students were provided with seven documents (one of which was an image) on which to base their responses. In order to answer this question, students had to have an understanding of the early modern period and evaluate the Catholic Church's views of new ideas in science (Key Concept 1.1 IV). Students were asked to write an essay containing a historically defensible claim that took a position on whether or not the Catholic Church in the 1600s was opposed to new ideas in science, with some indication of the line of reasoning. The responses were expected to provide context by situating the Catholic Church and/or the historical development of new ideas in science in the early modern period. To earn 1 point for evidence students were required to describe the content of at least three documents as evidence related to the Catholic Church's stance on new scientific ideas, and to earn 2 points students had to use at least six documents accurately to support an argument. Responses were also required to provide additional historical evidence beyond the documents connected to the Catholic Church's stance on new scientific ideas. In addition, responses were expected to articulate the audience, purpose, point of view, or historical situation for at least three sources. Finally, responses were required to demonstrate a complex understanding of the motivations of the Catholic Church, both to support and to oppose scientific investigation: by explaining a nuanced relationship of different elements within the Catholic Church and its stance on new scientific ideas; explaining insightful connections among these motivations; explaining connections within and across periods; qualifying or modifying an argument by considering diverse or alternative views or evidence; or qualifying one of the motivations with an alternative motivation.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Most responses attempted to write a thesis in the introduction or conclusion, and most were successful at providing a historically defensible claim about the Catholic Church's support and/or opposition to new ideas in science. In some instances, responses merely restated the prompt or did not indicate a line of reasoning. Thesis statements were sometimes more specific in the conclusion than in the introduction, and occasionally a long introductory paragraph providing contextualization also contained a thesis in one identifiable location. Many responses argued that the Catholic Church both opposed and supported new ideas in science to varying degrees. In some cases, responses without a viable thesis were still able to develop an argument or line of reasoning during the course of document analysis.

Responses were moderately successful at situating the Catholic Church and/or the historical development of new ideas in science in the early modern period with references most often to the Scientific Revolution, the Protestant Reformation, and the Catholic Reformation. Most responses that provided context did so in the introduction and tied it to the thesis. Most responses successfully described the content of at least three documents relevant to the Church and/or new ideas in science, although some struggled to use the content of at least six documents to support an argument in response to the prompt. Many responses attempted to provide evidence beyond the documents, especially with specific information not contained in the documents about the Church's trial of Galileo, contributions from other early modern scientists, further elaboration on Cartesian philosophy, or the historical development of the Jesuit Order. Some responses made a more nuanced analysis by providing complexity through the construction of multiple arguments and by using the documents in various ways. Many also achieved complexity by analyzing how different elements of the Church had other goals and motivations in dealing with the implications of the Scientific Revolution. Others explained how the Church both opposed

and supported scientific investigation as an attempt by Church authorities to maintain control over knowledge and education.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

On the whole, this question was clear, accessible, and focused on a mainstream topic about which students knew a great deal. Common misconceptions included describing the Catholic Church as a monolithic institution with one unified set of beliefs in response to new ideas of science. Some of the documents lent themselves to multiple interpretations, which occasionally led to misinterpretations. Other responses misinterpreted documents by misstating the perspective of the author, usually in the attempt to fit evidence from the document into the responses' own arguments. Because these documents were often lengthy, responses occasionally indicated correct analysis of one part but failure to recognize that the rest of the document contradicted that position. Some of the responses merely summarized or used long quotations from the documents. The point for using six documents to make an argument proved somewhat difficult to achieve, and some responses appeared to contradict their own thesis statement or organizational logic. Many responses earned the evidence beyond the documents point, typically through the use of Galileo's trial/house arrest. However, other attempts at this point failed to provide specific historical details relevant to the topic or argument or simply repurposed passages from the documents. A significant portion of the responses did not earn the point for sourcing, which continued to be challenging. Some responses successfully demonstrated complexity based on the church both supporting and opposing science, but this track usually worked only if the thesis was clear, compound, and indicated a sufficient line of reasoning. Responses attempting nuance often fell short due to misunderstanding the perspective of the documents. Few made attempts at qualifying or modifying an argument or at cross-period complexity.

| <i>Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps</i> | <i>Responses that Demonstrate Understanding</i> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses described the Catholic Church as a monolithic institution with one common set of beliefs in terms of the new science. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "While the Church as a consensus opposed new ideas in science, there were some who believed new ideas were necessary to give Catholics a greater amount of freedom and ability to understand new things." (<i>The response accurately describes divergent interpretations within the Church that differed from the consensus.</i>) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses claimed that the Scientific Revolution was preceded by the Enlightenment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "The Enlightenment was a direct result of the Scientific Revolution, new natural laws were discovered for scientific concepts however, during the Enlightenment new natural laws were search for economics (iron law of wages) and government (separation of power, Montesquieu)." (<i>The response explains the scientific foundation that provided impetus for the intellectual movement of the Enlightenment.</i>) |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should help students craft statements in their responses that can be clearly identified as a thesis, providing contextualization, using six documents to support an argument, using evidence beyond the documents, sourcing at least three documents, and demonstrating complex understanding. Teachers can assist their students with these skills through the use of the Unit Tests and the Personal Progress Checks. These materials have practice DBQs that are designed to develop students' skills over the course of the school year. The new practice DBQs are built around the curriculum available in the new Curriculum Course and Exam Guide available through the AP Audit site starting in August 2019. Older released exam DBQs can also help students hone required skills. The guidelines, samples, and scoring rationales offer models for students.
- Teachers should remind students that thesis statements need to be discrete, appear in the introduction or the conclusion, respond to the question with a claim or argument, and include a line of reasoning to be used to support that argument. In addition, as a step toward demonstrating complex understanding, a thesis that presents two sides of an argument often helps guide the response toward a greater level of sophistication. Teachers could use exercises that give students 15 minutes to read the documents, plan an answer to the prompt, and produce a thesis statement. Students can compare each other's thesis statements, share with the teacher and/or class, and check for understanding.
- Teachers should continue to train students to use at least six of the seven documents accurately to support an argument in the body of the essay. Teachers can again practice this throughout the year by adding to the 15-minute thesis exercise above, asking students to demonstrate which documents they would use to illustrate the arguments in their thesis.
- Teachers should remind students to think about each author's motivation, the purpose of the document, the audience the document might be addressing, and the historical situation or context of the document. Teachers can help students strengthen these skills by doing regular primary source exercises throughout the academic year. In-class activities can include asking students to find as many of the four types of sourcing for individual documents as possible.
- Teachers should introduce the ways to earn complexity from the DBQ rubric early in the school year. Because one way to demonstrate complexity is by explaining both sides, teachers can guide students to explain both sides of the DBQ prompt. An evaluation of the relative importance of each side can be displayed within the body paragraphs or in the conclusion.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Practice DBQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces beginning with scaffolded questions that represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and an increased challenge as teachers progress through the course. These are now available on AP Classroom as part of the collection of new resources for teachers for the 2019 school year. Specific question types and topics can be searched within these primary source DBQs and their accompanying scoring guidelines.
- Teachers will also find lessons on teaching the skills and practices necessary for success on the DBQ in the Teaching and Assessing Modules entitled *Analyzing Visual Sources and Evaluating Patterns of Continuity and Change in European Marginalization of the "Other,"* each of which focuses on the skills that are central to the DBQ. These modules also contain specific lessons that address analysis of evidence of a variety of formats, videos explaining this in conjunction with course content, and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks whose focus is the DBQ.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.

- Additional resources to support instruction of the “complex understanding” scoring point (the ‘complexity’ component of the historical skill of argumentation) have been created and are included in the collection of resources available to teachers in AP Classroom. Presentations to provide further resources on this point have taken place throughout the year and have included specific examples and teaching strategies that will be of help to teachers. Information and resources from these will be available online afterwards on the Online Teacher Community site.
- The instructional section of the AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that addresses each of the skills needed for the DBQ. The section beginning on page 220 addresses the different historical skills students will need to employ for success on this type of question with explanation and suggestions for instruction.

Question #2**Task:** LEQ**Topic:** Effects of State Centralization**Max. Points:** 6**Mean Score:** 2.62***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The Long Essay Question (LEQ) asks students to formulate a thesis/argument in response to a prompt about a particular historical development or episode in European history. In 2019 each LEQ asked students to determine the most significant effects of historical events or processes in European history. LEQs require students to formulate arguments, utilize evidence, address historical context, and display an ability to employ historical reasoning skills. In the case of LEQ 2, responses were expected to demonstrate historical reasoning, specifically analyzing the most significant effect of state centralization during the period 1450–1648 (Key Concept 1.5.I). Responses were expected to relate the topic of the prompt to the broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame specified in the prompt. Responses were expected to provide specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of state centralization in the period 1450–1648 and to use this specific historical evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt. Responses were expected to demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt, and, although the prompt directed students toward the historical reasoning process of causation, responses could also frame their arguments around other types of historical reasoning (comparison, continuity and change over time). Responses were expected to demonstrate a complex understanding of state centralization during the period 1450–1648. This demonstration of understanding could be achieved in various ways, for instance by explaining the most significant effect of state centralization, such as the increasing state control over religion or the decline in the power of the nobility, while noting that other effects such as increased taxation were also significant and interrelated. Responses could also explain relevant and insightful connections across time by discussing the continuation of the process of state centralization into the twentieth century. Responses were assessed on the extent to which they performed in the following four categories: thesis and/or claim, contextualization, evidence, and analysis and reasoning.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Most responses to this question demonstrated some ability to identify the most significant effect of state centralization during the period 1450–1648. Some responses went beyond the immediate or obvious effects of state centralization by analyzing effects over a broad span of years, in multiple countries, and on a variety of political, social, and economic groups in Europe. Some responses were more nuanced than others, with multiple effects addressed and ranked according to significance. These responses had many specific pieces of evidence supporting more than one argument within the body of the essay. A smaller group of responses exhibited a lack of chronological understanding or misunderstood the task of the essay, focusing on the causes of state centralization rather than the effects or confusing state centralization during the period 1450–1648 with the 19th-century unification movements in Italy and in Germany.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps | Responses that Demonstrate Understanding |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some responses failed to know the difference between the age of exploration and colonization and the later age of new imperialism. These were sometimes used incorrectly in a discussion of state centralization between 1450 and 1648. • Some responses revealed a lack of awareness of which states centralized and which failed to centralize during this time period. • In addition, some responses were unable to distinguish between state centralization during the period 1450–1648 and absolutism as developed in the late 17th and 18th centuries prior to the French Revolution. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The state centralization by European monarchs between 1450–1648 caused the entire landscape of Europe to become more powerful and well-off: politically, strong leaders such as Louis XIV and Peter the Great improved their countries standing; socially, religion was able to become more centralized and controlled; most importantly, economically, centralization caused overseas colonization and mercantilism.” <i>(The response makes a historically defensible statement linking the development of state centralization in Europe to increased monarchical power over economic and religious matters within states, and to increased international prestige and competition between states.)</i> • “The political centralization of European monarchs most significantly led to religious conflicts and changes that opened Europe up to a sense of intellectual freedom unlike ever before though the religious developments in Britain, France, and the HRE.” <i>(The response links political centralization to challenges to established religious authority. There is a line of reasoning established in the thesis that is carried through the body of the response.)</i> • “From 1450–1648, European monarchs centralized their power to drastically lower the power of the nobility, establishing absolutism.” <i>(The response links the development of centralized European monarchical power from 1450–1648 to the decline in noble influence, allowing for the later rise of absolutism. The body of the response further illustrates the ways in which centralized state authority resulted in the decline of the power of the aristocracy.)</i> |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should train students to write a thesis that makes a claim directly related to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning (e.g., “The most significant effect of state centralization was the lessening of the power of both nobles and the clergy.”). Teachers should also remind students to leave time at the end of the writing period to write a conclusion, as many responses to LEQ 2 contained a clearer, more sophisticated thesis in the conclusion than in the introduction.
- Teachers should instruct students to focus on using accurate, historical evidence to support an argument. Many successful responses to LEQ 2 used fewer pieces of specific evidence that were successfully developed and linked to an argument instead of many pieces of evidence that were off-topic and not linked to an argument.
- Teachers should recognize that the first point for historical reasoning is attainable for a student who writes a well-organized, planned response. This should be a multi-paragraph response with an introductory and concluding paragraph and body paragraphs containing clear topic sentences.
- Teachers should understand that the second analysis and reasoning point (complex understanding or complexity) is attainable and accessible for students through the adoption of the one of the approaches contained in the rubric. They should provide students with examples of various, successful demonstrations of complexity throughout the course of the year and create exercises that encourage students to corroborate, qualify, or modify historical arguments. If a prompt asks students to identify a most significant cause or effect, for example, the student could rank the causes and/or effects in terms of significance and provide an explanation for the reasoning behind their ranking.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Practice LEQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces beginning with scaffolded questions that represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and an increased challenge as teachers progress through the course. These are now available on AP Classroom as part of the collection of new resources for teachers for the 2019 school year. Specific question types and topics can be searched within these LEQs and their accompanying scoring guidelines.
- Teachers will find lessons on teaching the reasoning process of causation in the Teaching and Assessing Modules, a link to which is found on AP Central. The modules contain specific lessons that address causation, videos explaining causation in conjunction with this period, and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks whose skill focus is causation.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.
- The Online Teacher Community is a good resource for teachers to seek additional feedback and support from peers, by posting a question or comment in the discussion section or by checking what resources have already been posted in the “resources” tab.
- The instructional section of the AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that address each of the specific skills needed for the course. The section on page 220 specifically addresses the skills required for LEQs and provides suggestions for instruction. This section is followed by a section that provides instructional suggestions for the reasoning processes.

Question #3**Task:** LEQ**Topic:** 18th Century Population Growth**Max. Points:** 6**Mean Score:** 2.39***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The LEQ asks students to formulate a thesis/argument in response to a prompt about a particular historical development or episode in European history. In 2019 each LEQ asked students to determine the most significant effects of historical events or processes in European history. LEQs require students to formulate arguments, utilize evidence, address historical context, and display an ability to employ historical reasoning skills. In the case of LEQ 3, responses were expected to demonstrate historical reasoning, specifically analyzing the most significant effect of European population growth during the 18th century. Responses were expected to identify the single most important effect and provide a line of reasoning concerning their claims to this effect (Key Concepts 2.4 I and 2.4 III). Responses were expected to describe a broader historical context relevant to the effects of 18th-century population growth, provide specific examples of evidence relevant to the prompt, and support an argument in the response using specific and relevant examples of evidence. Finally, responses were expected to frame or structure an argument about 18th-century population growth using historical reasoning skills (e.g., comparison, causation, change and continuity over time) and demonstrate a complex understanding of the population growth using evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument. Responses were assessed on the extent to which they performed in the following four categories: thesis and/or claim, contextualization, evidence, and analysis and reasoning.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

In general, responses to this question demonstrated an understanding of how effects of 18th-century population growth relate to other 18th-century historical developments, including but not limited to urbanization, the rise of a consumer society, and the Industrial Revolution. Responses were able to describe a broader historical context relevant to 18th-century population growth by, for example, situating it as a product of more efficient agricultural production, the product of food diversity resulting from the Columbian Exchange, or the product of relative peace following the tumultuous 17th century in Europe. Some responses, however, identified and developed arguments related to the **causes** of population growth rather than its effects. Some responses did not establish the most significant effect of population growth or demonstrate a line of reasoning with thesis statements that merely listed multiple effects of population growth.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps | Responses that Demonstrate Understanding |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses identified and developed causes for 18th-century population growth rather than its effects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The most significant effect of population growth in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was that it contributed to industrialization by expanding urban areas and providing more labor for factories.” <i>(This response makes a clear and historically defensible claim that the most significant effect of population growth in the 18th century was the Industrial Revolution, while also establishing a line of reasoning as to why the Industrial Revolution was the most significant effect of population growth.)</i> “In conclusion, overpopulation in cities caused poor living conditions due to sanitation services not being able to accommodate the population growth.” <i>(The response makes a clear and historically defensible claim and establishes a line of reasoning as to why the stated development was significant. Although the valuation of poor living conditions is not explicitly identified as the most significant effect of population growth, it is implicit.)</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses provided multiple examples of effects or causes of, for example, urbanization or industrialization, but did not relate these to 18th-century population growth in Europe. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Industrialization caused by the growth created a much wealthier and prominent middle class, one which would aid the economy greatly as consumerism rose due to the large output of goods.” <i>(This response provides accurate evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.)</i> “Population grew as the industrial revolution emerged and with the surge in population, the capitalistic world of trade & economy seemed to grow. The growth of the population led to more industries and more consumer goods. Factories mass-produced products which decreased the products value and allowed less wealthy people (to) buy it without spending their life savings.” <i>(This response successfully uses evidence to support an argument linking population growth to consumerism and capitalism.)</i> |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should instruct students to be able to understand the difference between the effects of a historical development and its causes in order to prepare a thesis that demonstrates the historical reasoning process linked to the question (e.g., causation) and addresses the prompt provided.
- Teachers should train students to describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt by relating specific historical events, developments, or processes to the topic of the prompt rather than merely listing historical events.
- Teachers should train students to provide specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt that are elaborated appropriately and are different from those examples of evidence used to describe a broader historical context. Responses cannot earn different points for the same material.
- Teachers should recognize that a well-organized essay with clear topic sentences that addresses the prompt and/or the historical thinking skill can help students obtain the first point for historical reasoning. They should instruct students to begin their paragraphs with effective topic sentences that establish an argument and demonstrate a line of reasoning for the subsequent text.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Practice LEQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces beginning with scaffolded questions that represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and an increased challenge as teachers progress through the course. These are now available on AP Classroom as part of the collection of new resources for teachers for the 2019 school year. Specific question types and topics can be searched within these LEQs and their accompanying scoring guidelines.
- Teachers will find lessons on teaching the reasoning process of causation in the Teaching and Assessing Modules, a link to which is found on AP Central. The modules contain specific lessons that address causation, videos explaining causation in conjunction with this period, and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks whose skill focus is causation.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.
- The Online Teacher Community is a good resource for teachers to seek additional feedback and support from peers by posting a question or comment in the discussion section or by checking what resources have already been posted in the “resources” tab on the Online Teacher Community.
- The instructional section of the AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that address each of the specific skills needed for the course. The section on page 220 specifically addresses the skills required for LEQs and provides suggestions for instruction. This is followed by a section that provides instructional suggestions for the reasoning processes.

Question # 4**Task:** LEQ**Topic:** Effects of Great Depression**Max. Points:** 6**Mean Score:** 2.35***What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?***

The LEQ asks students to formulate a thesis/argument in response to a prompt about a particular historical development or episode in European history. In 2019 each LEQ asked students to determine the most significant effects of historical events or processes in European history. LEQs require students to formulate arguments, utilize evidence, address historical context, and display an ability to employ historical reasoning skills. In the case of LEQ 4, responses were expected to demonstrate historical reasoning, specifically analyzing the most significant effect of the Great Depression in Europe during the period 1929–1950 (Key Concept 4.2.III). Students were expected to identify a single most important effect of the Great Depression and provide a line of reasoning as to why this was the most significant effect. Responses were expected to relate the topic of the prompt to the broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame specified in the prompt. Responses were expected to provide specific examples of evidence relevant to the topic of the Great Depression and to use this specific historical evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt. Responses were expected to demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt, and, although the prompt directed students toward the historical reasoning skill of causation, responses could also frame their arguments around other types of historical reasoning (comparison, continuity and change over time). Responses were expected to demonstrate a complex understanding of the most significant effect of the Great Depression during the period 1929–1950. This could be achieved in various ways, including by explaining the most significant effect of the Great Depression, such as the rise of Hitler or World War II, while noting that other effects such as increased government intervention were also significant and interrelated, or by explaining relevant and insightful connections across time by discussing economic crises in other periods, such as the 2008 Great Recession or financial crises of the 20th century. Responses were assessed on the extent to which they performed in the following four categories: thesis and/or claim, contextualization, evidence, and analysis and reasoning.

How well did the response address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skills required on this question?

Most student responses specifically addressed three Key Concepts as contained in the European History Course and Exam Description under Key Concept 4.2.III, which states that the Great Depression, caused by weaknesses in international trade and monetary theories and practices, undermined Western European democracies and fomented radical political responses throughout Europe. When describing a broader historical context relevant to the prompt, responses tended to draw upon the content contained in Key Concept 4.2.III.A and Key Concept 4.2.III.B. Responses especially focused on the following: World War I debt, nationalistic tariff policies, overproduction, depreciated currencies, disrupted trade patterns, speculation that created weaknesses in economies worldwide, and dependence on post-World War I American investment capital that led to financial collapse when, following the 1929 stock market crash, the U.S. cut off capital flows to Europe. Thesis statements contained in these responses tended to focus on the social and political consequences of the Great Depression, with some responses mirroring the language contained in Key Concept 4.2.III.C: Despite attempts to rethink economic theories and policies and forge political alliances, Western democracies failed to overcome the Great Depression and were weakened by extremist movements. Responses typically established a causal relationship between the Great Depression and an effect of the Depression, such as the rise of Hitler or the creation of the welfare state, and were able to explain the connections between the cause and the effect.

What common student misconceptions or gaps in knowledge were seen in the responses to this question?

| Common Misconceptions/Knowledge Gaps | Responses that Demonstrate Understanding |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses identified and discussed multiple effects of the Depression without identifying the most significant of these or establishing a clear line of reasoning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Although most countries recovered from the effects of the Great Depression, the most significant effect included the economic devastations countries faced because it damaged the living conditions and caused political unrest, leading to World War Two.” “The most significant effect of the Great Depression in Europe from 1929 to 1950 was causing rising political extremism due to uncertain circumstances in the lives of all Europeans, and especially embracing larger governments and more government controlled economies.” <i>(These thesis statements clearly identify the most significant effect of the Great Depression in Europe during the period of 1929–1950, and they provide a historically-defensible line of reasoning for making this claim.)</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses, even after providing a clear line of reasoning in the thesis, adopted a more narrative approach to the question. Specifically, many students wrote narrative accounts of World War I, World War II, and the Holocaust, without returning to the topic of the prompt, the Great Depression. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “During the time of reasonable economic success and infrastructural rebound in Germany, the Weimar Republic was able to maintain the support of the population. However, once the economy collapsed people soon lost faith in their leadership. Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party represented the solution to Germany’s problem as they promised to restore former glory. With the Depression destroying the Weimar Republic’s credibility, the Nazis were able to win control in the following election. Furthermore, Hitler was able to play on economic struggle by stating the only way he could fix the situation was with total power. Hitler and Nazism rose to power due to the Great Depression’s effect on the German people.” <i>(This narrative of relevant developments repeatedly returns to the subject of the Depression.)</i> |

Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer to teachers to help them improve the student performance on the exam?

- Teachers should encourage students to consider, perhaps before writing their response, a list of possible effects but ultimately select one most significant effect. Some thesis statements provided a collection of various effects

without selecting the most significant one, but, in the conclusion, provided a more discernible single most significant effect and articulated a line of reasoning. Other thesis statements identified a single most important effect—typically the rise of authoritarian leaders—without explaining why this effect was significant.

- Teachers should remind students and reinforce the message that contextualization must consider more than a passing phrase or reference, and it must be relevant to the prompt, not something vaguely within the time period in question. Simply noting that “this was just like the debt problem before the French Revolution” or “The Great Depression began in America and spread around the world” is insufficient. Teachers should remind students that contextualization also includes events, ideas, and developments that occurred after the time frame specified in the prompt.
- Teachers should remind students that, in order to earn the first evidence point, they must provide at least two pieces of concrete, specific (to Europe), and accurate evidence relevant to the prompt. Many of the responses to LEQ 4 that did not earn this point provided one correct, relevant piece of evidence and one incorrect, off-topic, or generic piece of evidence.
- Teachers should recognize that a well-organized essay with clear topic sentences that address the prompt and/or the historical thinking skill can help students obtain the first point for historical reasoning. Students might also be encouraged to return to the prompt topic and their argument at the end of each paragraph. Even if seems overly simplistic, returning to the subject at hand and the historical reasoning process that informs the essay might prevent responses from drifting off-topic.
- Teachers should remember that the demonstration of complex understanding need not be woven throughout the essay or contained in a final paragraph, although many responses for LEQ 4 did demonstrate a complex understanding in a well-developed concluding paragraph containing specific examples of their claims—i.e., evidence that the Great Depression shaped European economic policy for decades and continues to inform today’s international monetary system.

What resources would you recommend to teachers to better prepare their students for the content and skill(s) required on this question?

- Practice LEQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces beginning with scaffolded questions that represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and an increased challenge as teachers progress through the course. These are now available on AP Classroom as part of the collection of new resources for teachers for the 2019 school year. Specific question types and topics can be searched within these LEQs and their accompanying scoring guidelines.
- Teachers will find lessons on teaching the reasoning process of causation in the Teaching and Assessing Modules, a link to which is found on AP Central. The modules contain specific lessons that address causation, videos explaining causation in conjunction with this period, and examples of assessments and student responses for tasks whose skill focus is causation.
- Teachers will find example responses from this question on AP Central, along with specific commentary explaining why each point was or was not earned.
- The Online Teacher Community is a good resource for teachers to seek additional feedback and support from peers by posting a question or comment in the discussion section, or by checking what resources have already been posted in the “resources” tab on the Online Teacher Community.
- The instructional section of the AP European History Course and Exam Description offers another collection of resources for teachers that address each of the specific skills needed for the course. The section on page 220 specifically addresses the skills required for LEQs and provides suggestions for instruction. This is followed by a section that provides instructional suggestions for the reasoning processes.