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# AP<sup>®</sup> Human Geography

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

### Set 1

#### **Inside:**

#### **Free Response Question 3**

- Scoring Guideline**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

**Question 3: Two Stimuli****7 points**

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**(A)** Describe the concept of a supranational organization.**1 point**

Accept one of the following:

- A1. Organization comprising multiple member countries with shared objectives and cooperation in political, economic, and/or sociocultural spheres.
- A2. Organization comprising multiple member countries with common objectives and policies that are binding for each member.
- A3. Organization of multiple member countries that promotes common objectives to improve the welfare of member states and/or to represent their interests on the global stage.
- A4. Organization of multiple member countries that collaborate on security, educational, cultural, economic, environmental, and political issues that affect them individually and as a group.

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**(B)** Using the gross domestic product (GDP) data in the table, explain ONE economic benefit to a country that joins ASEAN.**1 point**

Accept one of the following:

- B1. A country joining ASEAN, with its large and rapidly growing economy, is likely to be able to improve the member country's standard of living.
  - B2. The ASEAN GDP of \$2.8 trillion, larger than India and Brazil, gives its members a competitive edge in world trade.
  - B3. An economic benefit of belonging to a group of countries with rapid GDP growth is growth of GDP per capita over time.
  - B4. Joining ASEAN benefits a new member by becoming part of an economy growing twice as fast or faster than Brazil, Japan, the United States, or the EU.
  - B5. The combined GDP of ASEAN countries grew 106% (e.g., more than doubled) in a decade, so a new member would likely benefit from participation in a region with one of the world's fastest growth rates.
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- (C)** Using the ten-year GDP growth data in the table, explain ONE way that membership in ASEAN will affect the quality of life for citizens in member states. **1 point**

Accept one of the following:

- C1. GDP per capita as well as household income will rise (e.g., an average of 10% a year, a high rate of growth).
- C2. Quality of life will improve as rapid GDP growth stimulates government spending in education, healthcare, public welfare, and infrastructure (e.g., clean water, power grids, sewers).
- C3. Rapid economic growth will provide citizens greater access to employment and to higher-paying jobs, raising household incomes.

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- (D)** Explain ONE political advantage for countries that join a supranational organization, and explain ONE political disadvantage for countries that belong to supranational organizations. **2 points**

1. Advantages. **(1 point)**

Accept one of the following:

- D1a. Increases political and military strength in the face of threats external to the organization.
- D1b. Reduces political or military tensions between member countries.
- D1c. Food security among member states reduces hunger and incidences of famine that can lead to political instability.
- D1d. Economic growth through trade and other mechanisms (e.g., open borders, free trade) can lead to greater political stability for members.
- D1e. Supranational organizations represent their members on the world stage and act in the political interests of the member countries.
- D1f. Faster or less complicated intergovernmental or diplomatic agreements on trade or foreign policy between member states.

2. Disadvantages. **(1 point)**

Accept one of the following:

- D2a. Member countries lose sovereignty and/or independence as some supranational organizational laws and policies apply to internal political issues.
  - D2b. A financial crisis in one country can spill over to other member states, creating political crises.
  - D2c. As member countries appear to lose sovereignty, nationalist and separatist movements and parties that reject supranationalism may become problems.
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**(E)** Define the concept of economy of scale. **1 point**

Accept one of the following:

- E1. As the scale of production increases, the average production cost per unit decreases.
- E2. The larger a business is, the greater competitive advantage it has as it is able to produce more with greater cost savings.
- E3. Companies that cut costs and increase production may attain economies of scale through greater efficiency.
- E4. External factors such as access to specialized labor and reduced taxes can lower production costs and help companies attain economies of scale.

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**(F)** Using the data in the table, explain how economies of scale are important to understanding ASEAN’s competitiveness with Japan and China. **1 point**

Accept one of the following:

- F1. ASEAN can combine its members’ resources (e.g., land, labor, capital) to increase production, reduce costs, and be more competitive with larger economies such as China and Japan.
- F2. ASEAN has a competitive advantage because it has lower labor costs that reduce the cost of production for basic goods (e.g., low-technology goods, low-skill goods, low-cost goods) making it more efficient and competitive with China and Japan for foreign investment.
- F3. ASEAN has a competitive disadvantage with Japan because Japan’s smaller labor force is more effective at manufacturing specialized goods (e.g., high-technology goods, high-skill goods, high-cost goods) due to its highly efficient production system.
- F4. ASEAN has a competitive disadvantage with China because China’s large workforce has become better educated and more skilled, moving production from cheaper to higher-cost and specialized goods.

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**Total for question 3 7 points**

Question 1   Question 2   Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

A. A Supranational organization is a group of nations that agree to share some of their sovereign power in exchange for economic, political, and/or social cooperation.

B. One economic benefit to a country that joins ASEAN is that they get to share in the ~~GDP~~ GDP, so they also experience the economic growth of the other countries in ASEAN. Profits are shared, and losses are mitigated.

C. One way that membership in ASEAN will affect the ~~by~~ quality of life for citizens in member states is by improving it. A ~~go~~ higher GDP means that the country can invest more in infrastructure, so its citizens can enjoy better housing, transportation, and utilities.

D. One political advantage for countries that join a Supranational organization is that they have more allied countries that could ~~assist~~ assist them in times of war. One political disadvantage is that they are obligated to do the same, even if the country that started the war did so for a reason that another country of the same Supranational organization may not agree with.

E. Economy of scale is the point where extending and increasing ~~and~~ an industry ends up making the industry cost less ~~in terms of~~ per product. money in the production of each individual product.

F. Economies of Scale are important to understanding ASEAN's competitiveness with Japan ~~in asia~~ and China in the way that multiple countries can combine

Question 1   Question 2   Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

resources enough to make it economically feasible for an economy of scale to occur. Even though it may cost more money upfront, each item manufactured costs less overall, leading to a higher GDP, higher profits, and a better chance at competing with Japan and China, which are ~~economic~~ economic and ~~manufact-~~ ~~uring~~ manufacturing giants.

Question 1   Question 2   Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

- A. A Supranational organization, is a group of states who join together in order to achieve a specific political, economic, or other goal.
- B. One economic benefit ~~to~~ a country that joins ASEAN may have is that their gross domestic product will increase greatly. ~~As~~ evidenced by the fact that from 2008 to 2017 the combined countries of ASEAN had a GDP increase of 106%.
- C. One way that joining ASEAN will ~~benefit a country~~ affect the quality of life of a country's citizens is through benefiting the economically therefore allowing for a better quality of life. Over a ten year period the GDP of ASEAN's countries increased by 106% meaning that the people in these countries had an increase in income and quality of life.
- D. One political advantage of joining a supranational organization, is that countries have the other countries in the organization to call on for aid and political support. on the other hand one disadvantage to ~~the~~ joining a supranational organization is that the country now has to follow the rules of that organization, and are bound to help the other countries in the organization should need arise.

Question 1   Question 2   Question 3



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

E. The concept of economic scale is defined as the ~~way that~~ the relative size of an economy based off of ~~the~~ the location of its producers and consumers.

F. Economies of scale are important to <sup>understanding</sup> ~~showing~~ ASEAN's competitiveness with Japan and China, ~~by showing~~ because Japan and China both have a ~~small~~ large scale market from which ~~they~~ their economies thrive. ASEAN's countries although they have many different economies still don't produce as much GDP as China and Japan showing that the combined economies still don't match up causing this competitiveness.

## Question 1   Question 2   Question 3

Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

- 3A. A supranational organization is a collection of nations and states that work together for economic, political, or other types of advantages.
- 3B. An economic advantage to a country that joins ASEAN is that they are joining an organization of countries that are increasing their overall Gross Domestic Product Growth substantially. This could have a cascading effect onto your the new-coming country and will gain them more influence.
- 3C. A membership in ASEAN will could effect the quality of life for citizens in member states both negatively and positively. A new country gaining a membership could create competition between the other countries. This could make the quality of living worse as they would not be getting as much income. Due to the competition.
- 3D. A political advantage a country could receive after joining a major supranational organization is ~~greater influence and power~~ greater protection in the case of a major war. A disadvantage ~~to~~ for a country joining a supranational organization is that they may lose some individual political influence. This could be caused by mandatory open borders like the EU.
- 3E. The concept of economy of scale is that the economy is almost based around a scale. Thus increasing that scale/size you should increase the status and size of your economy. This can be seen in Dairy farms where corporations have scaled their ~~to~~ farms/feedlots bigger and bigger ~~getting~~ <sup>earning</sup> a larger economic gain.
- 3F. ASEAN is attempting to use the concept of economy of scale to compete with China and Europe. Their ideology is if they can grow their economies larger and larger by working together and creating a larger scale they should be able to compete and surpass Japan and China.

### Question 3

**Note:** Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

#### Overview

The responses to this question were expected to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the concepts of supranationalism and supranational organizations. Responses were expected to be able to address reasons why countries join supranational organizations, particularly how countries benefit economically and politically by joining ASEAN, as well as how quality of life for individual citizens is impacted by ASEAN membership. On the flip side, students needed to explain how supranational organizations, in this case ASEAN, challenge state sovereignty by limiting the economic or political actions of member states. Further, students were required to know the concept of economy of scale and apply that concept to understanding ASEAN's competitiveness with Japan and China. In this question, students' responses needed to incorporate geographic thinking for individuals, countries, supranational organizations, and a large world region.

Skills required of the students were to (1) describe the concepts of supranational organizations and economy of scale, (2) explain spatial relationships in a specified region of the world by explaining a political advantage as well as a political disadvantage to supranational organization membership, (3) explain patterns and trends in gross domestic product quantitative data to draw a conclusion about the impact on countries and their citizens, (4) explain what the data implies about the geographic concept of economies of scale as it applies to the competitiveness of ASEAN with the countries of Japan and China.

#### Sample: 3A

##### Score: 7

The response in part A earned 1 point because it describes the concept of a supranational organization as a group of countries sharing economic, political, and/or social objectives.

The response in part B earned 1 point because it explains how a country that joined ASEAN would benefit from participation in a region with one of the world's fastest growth rates.

The response in part C earned 1 point because it explains how the quality of life will improve as rapid gross domestic product growth stimulates government spending in education, health care, public welfare, and infrastructure.

The response in part D1 earned 1 point because it explains how a country that joined a supranational organization would have a political advantage by having increased political and military strength in the face of threats external to the organization.

The response in part D2 earned 1 point because it explains that member countries lose sovereignty/independence as some supranational organizational laws and policies apply to internal political issues.

The response in part E earned 1 point because it defined the concept of economy of scale by stating that, as the scale of production increases, the average per-unit production cost decreases.

The response in part F earned 1 point because it explained how ASEAN can combine resources to increase production, reduce costs, and be more competitive with larger economies such as China and Japan.

### Question 3 (continued)

**Sample: 3B**

**Score: 5**

The response in part A earned 1 point because it describes the concept of a supranational organization as multiple countries joining together to achieve political or economic objectives.

The response in part B earned 1 point because it explains how a country that joined ASEAN, which has a rapid gross domestic product growth, would also expect growth of gross domestic product over time.

The response in part C earned 1 point because it explains how membership in ASEAN would benefit the citizens' quality of life by the improved economy and increasing incomes.

The response in part D1 earned 1 point because it explains how members of ASEAN would have a political advantage because membership increases political and military strength in the face of threats external to the organization.

The response in part D2 earned 1 point because it explains how members of ASEAN could have a disadvantage by having to follow the laws and policies of the organization.

The response in part E did not earn a point because it does not define the concept of economy of scale

The response in part F did not earn a point because it does not explain how economies of scale are important to understand ASEAN's competitiveness with Japan and China.

**Sample: 3C**

**Score: 3**

The response in part A earned 1 point because it describes the concept of a supranational organization as states working together for economic and political objectives.

The response in part B did not earn a point because it does not explain how, based on gross domestic product data, a country that joins ASEAN would receive an economic benefit.

The response in part C did not earn a point because it does not explain why ASEAN's gross domestic product growth would affect the quality of life for the citizens in member states.

The response in part D1 earned 1 point because it explains how members of ASEAN would have a political advantage because membership increases political and military strength in the face of threats external to the organization.

The response in part D2 earned 1 point because it explains how members of ASEAN could have a disadvantage as members lose sovereignty/independence as some supranational organizational laws and policies apply to internal political issues.

The response in part E did not earn a point because it does not define the concept of economy of scale.

The response in part F did not earn a point because it does not correctly explain how economies of scale with greater efficiency and lower cost inputs are important to understanding ASEAN's competitiveness with Japan and China.