

2015 AP® US HISTORY FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

“None of Nature’s landscapes are ugly so long as they are wild.”

John Muir, 1901

“I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after us.”

Former president Theodore Roosevelt, 1910

2. Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- a) Briefly explain ONE implication for public policy of John Muir’s view on land use.
- b) Briefly explain ONE way in which an implication for public policy of Theodore Roosevelt’s view contrasts with the implication for public policy of Muir’s view.
- c) Identify ONE specific example of land use policy in the United States from 1890 to 1945 and briefly explain how the example is consistent with the view of either Muir or Roosevelt.

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“As to the history of the revolution, my ideas may be peculiar, perhaps singular. What do we mean by the revolution? The war? That was no part of the revolution; it was only an effect and consequence of it. The revolution was in the minds of the people, and this was effected from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen years, before a drop of blood was shed at Lexington.”

Former president John Adams to former president Thomas Jefferson,
August 1815

“There is nothing more common than to confound the terms of the American Revolution with those of the late American war. The American war is over: but this is far from being the case with the American Revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed. It remains yet to establish and perfect our new forms of government; and to prepare the principles, morals, and manners of our citizens, for these forms of government, after they are established and brought to perfection.”

Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence and delegate
to the Continental Congress, January 1787

3. Using the excerpts, answer (a), (b), and (c).

- a) Briefly describe ONE significant difference between Adams' understanding and Rush's understanding of the American Revolution.
- b) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development from the period between 1760 and 1800 could be used to support Adams' interpretation.
- c) Briefly explain how ONE specific historical event or development from the period between 1760 and 1800 could be used to support Rush's interpretation.

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Question 2 or Question 3

Suggested writing time: 35 minutes

Directions: Choose EITHER Question 2 or Question 3.

In your response you should do the following.

- State a relevant thesis that directly addresses all parts of the question.
- Support your argument with evidence, using specific examples.
- Apply historical thinking skills as directed by the question.
- Synthesize the elements above into a persuasive essay that extends your argument, connects it to a different historical context, or connects it to a different category of analysis.

2. Evaluate the extent to which the Seven Years' War (French and Indian War, 1754–1763) marked a turning point in American relations with Great Britain, analyzing what changed and what stayed the same from the period before the war to the period after it.
3. Evaluate the extent to which the Mexican-American War (1846–1848) marked a turning point in the debate over slavery in the United States, analyzing what changed and what stayed the same from the period before the war to the period after it.

WHEN YOU FINISH WRITING, CHECK YOUR WORK ON SECTION II IF TIME PERMITS.

STOP

END OF EXAM

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Short Answer Question 2

0–3 points

Score 3

Response accomplishes **all three** tasks set by the question.

Score 2

Response accomplishes **two** of the tasks set by the question.

Score 1

Response accomplishes **one** of the tasks set by the question.

Score 0

Response accomplishes **none** of the tasks set by the question.

Score —

Is completely blank.

SCORING NOTES

a) Explains ONE implication for public policy of John Muir’s view on land use.

- Preservation/preservationists (students must explain the implications of this term)
- Formation of preservationist organizations and movement to preserve the land in its natural state
- Engendered idea of worth in natural beauty of landscape and preservation in natural state as having social value that trumped economic value

b) Explains ONE way in which an implication for public policy of Theodore Roosevelt’s view contrasts with the implication for public policy of Muir’s view.

- Conservation/conservationists (students must explain the implications of this term)
- Formation of movement at federal level, supported by progressive ideals and presidents, to conserve the land (intelligent use)
- Social value in the conservation of land and resources, with eye toward sustainability over time, but also the need to manage the resources provided by the land to best balance the benefit to society with social and economic values
- Square Deal: a pro-business or pro-development outlook can coexist with conservationist views (Theodore Roosevelt’s 3Cs: consumer protection, control of corporations, and conservation)

c) Identifies ONE specific example of land use policy in the United States from 1890 to 1945 and briefly explains how the example is consistent with the view of either Muir or Roosevelt.

- Establishment of national park system, national monuments, national historic sites and archaeological sites (Antiquities Act; National Park Service) — Muir.
- Managed use of the land (Newlands Reclamation Act; Civilian Conservation Corps; Agricultural Adjustment Acts), regulations of land use to allow but control impact of mining, logging, water use, etc. — Roosevelt.

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Short Answer Question 2 (continued)

- Infrastructure projects designed to balance managed use of the land with preservation; these were more consistent with Roosevelt: hydroelectric dams, etc. (Hetch Hetchy; Hoover Dam; Tennessee Valley Authority).
- Growth of movement (e.g., Roosevelt or Muir) to preserve land and prevent exploitation and abuse of natural resources and environment, whether through federal regulation and establishment of federal agencies (White House Conference on Conservation; Department of the Interior; U.S. Fish Commission) or the organization of nonprofit private organizations like the Sierra Club.
- Land use policy examples must be from within time period 1890-1945; student must indicate “founding of a national park system” or other policy, beyond merely name-dropping specific national parks (for example, Yellowstone and Yosemite were both established before 1890).

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Question 2

Evaluate the extent to which the Seven Years' War (French and Indian War, 1754–1763) marked a turning point in American relations with Great Britain, analyzing what changed and what stayed the same from the period before the war to the period after it.

A. Thesis: 0–1 point

Skills assessed: Argumentation + Periodization

States a thesis that directly addresses all parts of the question. The thesis must do more than restate the question.

1 point

Does not state a thesis that directly addresses all parts of the question or has a thesis that merely restates the question.

0 points

Response is completely blank.
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B. Support for argument: 0–2 points

Skills assessed: Argumentation + Use of Evidence

Supports the stated thesis (or makes a relevant argument) using specific evidence.

OR

Supports the stated thesis (or makes a relevant argument) using specific evidence, clearly and consistently stating how the evidence supports the thesis or argument, and establishing clear linkages between the evidence and the thesis or argument.

2 points

Response does not use specific evidence to support the stated thesis or a relevant argument.

0 points

Response is completely blank.
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C. Application of targeted historical thinking skill: 0–2 points

Skill assessed: Periodization

PERIODIZATION

Describes the ways in which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from OR similar to developments that preceded and/or followed.

OR

Analyzes the extent to which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from AND similar to developments that preceded and/or followed, providing specific examples to illustrate the analysis.

2 points

Response does not describe the ways in which the historical development specified in the prompt was different from OR similar to developments that preceded and/or followed.

0 points

Response is completely blank.
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Question 2 (continued)

D. Synthesis: 0–1 point

Skill assessed: Synthesis

Response synthesizes the argument, evidence, and context into a coherent and persuasive essay by accomplishing one or more of the following as relevant to the question.			
Appropriately extends or modifies the stated thesis or argument. 1 point	OR	Explicitly employs an additional appropriate category of analysis (e.g., political, economic, social, cultural, geographic, race, gender) beyond that called for in the prompt. 1 point	OR Appropriately connects the topic of the question to other historical periods, geographical areas, contexts, or circumstances. 1 point
Response does not synthesize the argument, evidence, and context into a coherent and persuasive essay. 0 points			
Response is completely blank. —			

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Question 2 (continued)

SCORING NOTES

The focus of the response helps determine what information is considered appropriate.

Thesis

An acceptable thesis would evaluate the extent to which the Seven Years' War was a turning point.

Possible thesis statements could include the following:

- Resentments resulting from the war and its aftermath fostered a nascent independence movement in the colonies and led to the American Revolution.
- Most colonists saw themselves as British subjects, despite resentments over the Seven Years' War or the war debt.
- For some colonial groups, such as the elite, the Seven Years' War marked a major turning point in relations, while for others, such as the colonial common people, the relations with Great Britain remained much the same.
- This war, to a great extent, marked a turning point in the relationship between America and Britain due to the change in economic policies, the restricted expansion, and the limited preservation of trade relations with England.
- The French and Indian war marked a major turning point in American relations with Great Britain, with changes such as increased British control and anti-British sentiment in the colonies, but also continuities such as a loyalty to Britain that remained largely untouched by the war.

Support for Argument

Commonly seen evidence includes the following:

- Debt from the Seven Years' War crippled Great Britain.
- Taxes levied on the colonies to pay for the debt; taxation and efforts of Britain to assert greater control over colonial affairs (Grenville ministry).
- Colonial resentments over the Seven Years' War; loss of generation; treatment of colonial forces by British regulars.
- British troops left in the American colonies, standing army.
- Passage of the Proclamation of 1763 to prevent movement of settlers across Appalachians.
- British efforts to pacify and negotiate with American Indians resulted in colonial resentment.
- Tightening of control in the mercantile system, period of salutary neglect ended.
- Sugar Act (Revenue Act), 1764, and Stamp Act, 1765, levied to pay for war debt.
- Trans-Atlantic exchanges throughout period brought ideals of republicanism, liberalism, natural rights, democracy and experimental political systems to the colonies; long-term influence of the Enlightenment — all fostered the independence movement.
- The Albany Plan of Union as an early attempt at colonial unity.
- Growth of a unique colonial identity at odds with British view of colonials.

Application of Historical Thinking Skills

- Essays earn 1 point by describing the ways in which the events of the Seven Year's War were different from OR similar to developments that preceded and/or followed in relations with Great Britain.
- Essays earn 2 points by analyzing the ways in which the events of the Seven Year's War were different from AND similar to developments that preceded and/or followed in relations with Great Britain, providing specific examples to illustrate the analysis.

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Question 2 (continued)

Synthesis

Responses can earn the synthesis point by crafting a persuasive and coherent essay. This can be accomplished by providing an argument or conclusion that extends or modifies the analysis in the essay, by introducing another category of historical analysis, or by making a connection to another historical period.

Examples include but are not limited to the following:

- Explicitly calling out the social, cultural, gender, or racial elements of a largely military and diplomatic story.
- Concretely and explicitly linking the Seven Years' War to subsequent conflicts such as the American Revolution or the War of 1812.