



Chief Reader Report on Student Responses:

2024 AP® United States History Set 1

Free-Response Questions

- Number of Students Scored 488,688
- Number of Readers 3,268
- Score Distribution

Exam Score	N	%At
5	62,610	12.8
4	162,967	33.3
3	127,117	26.0
2	94,957	19.4
1	41,037	8.4

- Global Mean 3.23

The following comments on the 2024 free-response questions for AP® United States History were written by the Chief Reader, Hilary Green, James B. Duke Professor, Davidson College. 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.

Short Answer Question 1

Task: Short Answer Question

Topic: Historians on the Origins of the Women's Movement

Max Score: 3

Mean Score: 1.34

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- This question asked students to describe the difference between the arguments in two excerpts from historians about women's rights. The first excerpt by Keith Melder argues that women, due to religious movements and frustration with the limitations placed on them, came together to establish and support the woman's right movement. The second excerpt by Gerta Lerner argues that due to industrialization there was a significant difference between middle-class and lower-class women's activism. These differences led to middle-class women focusing on women's rights reform activism while lower-class women focused on activism for economic advancement.
- Responses had to provide relevant evidence between 1800 and 1848 not found in the excerpts and explain how that evidence supported each of the arguments found in the excerpts.
- This question focused on analyzing secondary sources and using historical evidence.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Students were able to interpret Melder's argument that women came together to establish and push for the women's rights movement. Although many students were able to also address Lerner's argument about class divisions, this was harder for students than addressing Melder's interpretation.
- Students were very familiar with certain historical events from 1800 to 1848 that connected to the women's rights movement to support Melder's and Lerner's interpretations such as Seneca Falls Convention, cult of domesticity, temperance movement, republican motherhood, the Lowell Mills or market revolution, and the abolitionism.
- Most students were able to understand the historical events discussed but many struggled to put them within the context of the author's argument.

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">• A common issue was that students would provide Melder's interpretation correctly, but did not understand Lerner's interpretation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better responses clearly identified Melder and Lerner's main points and understood the difference between the two arguments.• "Melder interprets that women have found a sisterhood through their societal limitations while Lerner believes different classes of women were separate and middle class women were the push for women's rights while Melder states all women were brought together."

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A common misconception was providing the similarities between Melder and Lerner in relation to the women’s rights movement rather than differences in their interpretations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses clearly distinguished between the arguments of the two historians. “One major difference between Melder and Lerner’s interpretations is the collective goals of the women’s rights movement. Melder argues that all women collectively supported the women’s rights movement while Lerner argues that lower class women were fighting for different things than middle and upper class women.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A common issue that students had was describing the historical event but not connecting it to the author’s argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses made sure to not only describe the historical event, but directly connect it back to the author’s argument. “One historic event to support Melder was the establishment of the Seneca Falls Convention. This brought together women collectively to fight for equal rights and voting rights for women and bonded women together in their fight.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A common misconception with Lerner’s argument was that students did not connect their evidence to class differences between women and instead related it to all women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses connected their historical evidence to middle-class or lower-class women rather than all women. “The market revolution sparked an intense period of income inequality. This meant women were subject to working a lot to provide for their families. As Lerner says, this meant middle class women who did not work long hours stepped up to fight for women’s rights. Post American Revolution, they felt their roles were being lowered and fought back.”

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

- Students struggled to read carefully through the excerpts and correctly identify the author’s main argument.
 - Students could practice reading and analyzing secondary excerpts in the classroom and describing the author’s various points in the excerpt.
 - Students could practice active notetaking and reading practices to help them decipher what the various claims of the excerpts are. This could be done as homework or groupwork.
- Students struggled to connect the historical events to the author’s argument.
 - Students could practice briefly explaining a historical event and then writing its connection to the excerpt’s argument.
 - Teachers could have students work together to identify not only the historical event that supports the author’s argument but then writing explanations of why it supports that argument.

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course, including practice SAQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. The formative items are scaffolded so that early items represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and later items become increasingly challenging as teachers progress through the course.
- AP Classroom includes the Teaching and Assessing Modules on Period 4: 1800–1848, which address the content related to this question.
- The optional activity for Topic 4.10 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#) offers students an opportunity to practice making and explaining connections between the Second Great Awakening and reform movements.
- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 4.9 and 4.11 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#)—such as the Preamble and Constitution of the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association, as well as the “Constitution and By-laws of the Martha Washington Salem Union No. 4 Daughters of Temperance”—to examine women’s roles in social activism.
- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.

Short Answer Question 2

Task: Short Answer Question

Topic: New Deal and Government Policy

Max Score: 3

Mean Score: 1.66

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Responses were expected to describe one historical situation in which a poster promoting the Social Security Administration was implemented.
- Responses were expected to explain how the poster reflected a change in ideas about the role of government between 1877 and 1936.
- Responses were expected to explain how beliefs about the role of government such as the one reflected by the poster continued after 1945.
- The question primarily addressed Topics 6.1, 6.6, 6.12, 6.14, 7.4, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, 8.4, 8.9, and 8.15.
- Skills needed to respond to this question were Historical Thinking Skills 2 and 5.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Many responses successfully described how economic misfortune and mass unemployment during the Great Depression led to New Deal policies and programs designed to aid in relief and recovery.
- Many responses explained how government economic policy generally embraced laissez-faire ideas before the Great Depression, and that calls for government intervention, such as the New Deal, increased in the years just before 1936 due to the Great Depression.
- Responses mostly explained that some Americans expected government intervention in social and economic issues after 1945, such as through Great Society programs or other federal regulatory programs.
- Responses were generally successful at describing the historical situation of the source as being during the Great Depression.
- Responses were generally successful at analyzing the changing beliefs of the role of government during periods of large-scale economic distress and the continuity of those beliefs in more interventionist economic policies after 1945.

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">• The most common knowledge gap for (a) was an error in chronology. Responses often confused President Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal with President Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better responses correctly identified the Great Depression as the historical situation of the document.• “The Great Depression was a reason in the creation of the poster. The Great Depression was a time of economic depression, resulting from the crash of the stock market and the collapse of

	<p>the bank. With FDR's new deal, seeking relief, reform, and recovery the Social Security Act provided a form of relief.”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses merely stated terminology from the period but did not describe them enough to provide the historical situation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses described the poverty and unemployment of the Great Depression and explained that the New Deal was designed to address those problems. “When FDR was elected during the Great depression he enacted social security and many other government aid programs to assist the people and try to save the country from its economic peril.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most common knowledge gap in the responses for (b) was that responses argued that the New Deal was designed as a Progressive Era response to the economic needs of Americans as a result of industrial capitalism, rather than to assist Americans in managing economic distress during the Great Depression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses identified that beliefs about government in the Gilded Age emphasized that government should play little to no role in the market and lives of Americans but that this changed over time in response to periods of economic contraction as more people accepted and expected government intervention in the economy and the lives of Americans. “The image reflected change in the role of government shifted from laissez faire ideology to a more prominent role of the federal government in business and social affairs.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A common weakness of some responses was explaining that the New Deal arose as a result of Americans deemphasizing the importance of foreign policies (participation in World War One, Imperialism, etc) in favor of domestic policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses explained the influence of laissez-faire economic policy, which eschewed the use of government power to intervene in the lives of Americans to ameliorate social problems. “During the late 1800s many people believed in very laissez-faire policy's: little to no government intervention in anything, especially a person's private life. However, after the progressive era reform movements swept across the United States which proposed more radical ideas about the role of government in private lives, people began to state that the government needed to provide the public with more funded social services.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most common knowledge gap in the responses for (c) were specific government programs—such as Medicare, Medicaid, the SNAP program, and the Affordable Care Act—that addressed the economic needs of Americans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses correctly identified government regulations, programs, or policies that reflected a continued acceptance and expectation of government intervention in the economy and American lives.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The belief expressed in the image, that of direct government interference in the economy, continued after 1945 through President Johnson’s Great Society. Marketed like the New Deal to internally improve the nation, pieces of legislation passed that warranted aid/direct connections between the economy and government, which continues ideals expressed in the image.”
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Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve student performance on the exam?

- Students often struggled with the differences between the terms “describe” and “explain.”
 - Teachers can refer to the definitions of these terms in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#).
 - Another activity could be to have students bring in classroom-appropriate candy (or any favored item) and practice using that command term on that item. Then have them explain/describe the piece of candy they have. For this prompt, describing a Starburst, or explaining a piece of chocolate could be valuable opportunities to wrestle with the expectations of the prompts they will see in a constructive and fun way.
 - Other “describe” activities: provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic. Description requires more than simply mentioning an isolated term. Students could be asked to describe a friend, describe their daily routine, or describe their favorite piece of art as practice.
 - Other “explain” activities: Provide information about how or why a historical development or process occurs or how or why a relationship occurs. Students could be asked to explain how to make a meal or to ride a bike; they could be asked to explain the role of their friends in their lives.
- Students often were able to identify laissez-faire ideology, the 1929 stock market crash, the Great Depression, the New Deal, and the Great Society, Medicare, and Medicaid. Often, they were unable to explain government policies or programs beyond these terms. Ensuring that students have specific evidence to support their explanations is a key feature of crafting responses that earn all points.
 - Consider having students write graphic novels about individual people who benefitted from business regulations (e.g., increased safety), environmental regulation (e.g., decreased pollution, health benefits), education programs (e.g., improved incomes), SNAP benefits (e.g., food security) and other Great Society and government programs that expanded government involvement in the economy.

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course, including practice SAQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. The formative items are scaffolded so that early items represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and later items become increasingly challenging as teachers progress through the course.

- AP Classroom includes the Teaching and Assessing Modules on Period 7: 1890–1945 and Period 8: 1945–1980, which address the content related to this question.
- The optional activity for Topic 7.10 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#) offers students an opportunity to practice making and explaining connections between the New Deal and the United States economy.
- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 7.10 and 8.9 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#)—such as Frederick K. Johnson’s discussion of “The Civilian Conservation Corps” and John Robert Moore’s article “The Conservative Manifesto,” as well as Lyndon B. Johnson’s “Remarks Upon Signing the Food Stamp Act” and Guian McKee’s analysis of the first year of Medicare—to discuss changing views on the role of the government.
- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at:
<https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.

Short Answer Question 3

Task: Short Answer Question

Topic: The American Revolution

Max Score: 3

Mean Score: 1.87

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Responses were expected to describe one British government policy that was enacted in North America from 1763 to 1776.
- Responses were expected to explain one similarity or difference between two groups in North America in how they responded to British policy between 1763 to 1783.
- Responses were expected to explain one historical development that contributed to the American colonists' victory over Great Britain from 1775 to 1783.
- The questions primarily addressed Topics 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Responses often demonstrated understanding of British taxation policies such as the Stamp Act and Townshend Acts.
- Responses often demonstrated understanding of other British policies such as the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Navigation Acts, and the Coercive (Intolerable) Acts.
- Many responses successfully demonstrated how loyalists and Patriots responded differently to the British policies implemented between 1763 to 1783.
- Many responses successfully demonstrated how the Sons and Daughters of Liberty similarly supported the boycott of British goods due to opposition towards British policies.
- A skill needed for this question was Skill 5: Making Connections, such as identifying similarities and differences between groups.
- A skill needed for this question was Skill 1: Developments and Processes, such as identifying a historical development and its 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">• The most common misconception was that all the British policies were taxation policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better responses identified how British policy negatively or positively affected North American colonists.• "The Tea Act allowed the colonists to buy tea directly from the British East India company. This made tea cheaper."

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A common misconception was that all loyalists supported British policies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better responses differentiated how diverse North American colonists responded to enacted British policies. • “The loyalists did not agree with breaking away from Britain. They did not like all of the policies but wanted to remain with Britain. The patriots wanted representation and did not like the taxes so they wanted to break away.” |
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Based on your experience at the AP® Reading with student responses, what advice would you offer teachers to help them improve student performance on the exam?

- Teachers need to reinforce the purpose behind each British imperial policy to help combat widespread student misunderstanding that all policies were tax policies.
- Teachers should address how specific groups of colonists responded to the British policies. Activities may include a Venn diagram comparing the specific groups such as the Sons and Daughters of Liberty, loyalists and Patriots, the Stamp Act Congress, and the Second Continental Congress.
- Teachers should have students identify key events and developments and identify how the events and developments contributed to colonial victory in the Revolutionary War.

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course, including practice SAQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. The formative items are scaffolded so that early items represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and later items become increasingly challenging as teachers progress through the course.
- AP Classroom includes the Teaching and Assessing Module on Period 3: 1754–1800, which addresses the content related to this question.
- The optional activity for Topic 3.5 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#) offers students an opportunity to practice making claims with historical evidence while discussing the American Revolution.
- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 7.10 and 3.5 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#)—such as Mercy Otis Warren’s letter to Hannah Winthrop and a description of the actions of the Daughters of Liberty in *The Essex Gazette*, as well as Christian Barnes’ letter to Elizabeth Inman and an editorial regarding the Dunmore Proclamation—to discuss varying colonial responses to British policies.
- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.

Short Answer Question 4

Task: Short Answer Question

Topic: Cold War policy 1945-1991

Max Score: 3

Mean Score: 1.46

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- This question asked students to demonstrate an understanding of United States Cold War policy.
- The question required students to describe one United States Cold War policy from 1945 to 1980.
- The question required students to explain a similarity or difference in two groups response to a Cold War policy from 1945 to 1980.
- The question required students to explain a specific historical development after 1980 that contributed to the end of the Cold War.
- This question primarily addressed Topics 8.2, 8.7, and 9.3.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Responses succeeded in meeting many of the content demands of the question while demonstrating required historical thinking skills by explaining similarities and differences between two groups' responses to a Cold War policy as well as the causes that contributed to the end of the Cold War.
- Responses demonstrated a good understanding of United States Cold War policy.
- Responses struggled to identify specific groups, but often effectively explained groups' responses to Cold War policy in more general terms.
- Responses often explained specific historical developments that contributed to the end of the Cold War, but sometimes they included examples from outside the period of the prompt.
- A skill needed for this question was Skill 5: Making Connections, which involves explaining how a historical development or process relates to another historical development or process.
- A reasoning process needed for this question was Comparison, which involves being able to explain similarities or differences between different historical developments or processes.

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">• The most common knowledge gap was the inability of many responses to identify specific groups for comparing or contrasting responses to Cold War policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better responses correctly identified relevant groups and appropriately explained their responses to Cold War policy.• “Two notable groups during the Cold War were Republicans and Democrats. Although majority of the time these two parties disagreed, the containment of communism was a mutual agreement between these two parties, in which

	these two parties would attempt to stop communism spreading.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another common knowledge gap was a weakness in periodization. For part (c), many responses included examples of specific historical developments that contributed to the end of the Cold War that came before 1980, for example the creation of NATO or the SALT I Treaty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses correctly identified specific historical developments after 1980 that contributed to the end of the Cold War. “The destruction of the Berlin Wall, which kept the capitalist West Germany and the communist East Germany apart from shortly after WW2 to the late ’80s symbolized the end of hostilities between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 and its impending economic downfall in the ’80s brought on by protests in many Eastern bloc countries saw the Cold War end.”

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

- Students often failed to identify specific groups and to explain their responses to Cold War policies.
 - Teachers could have students use T-charts to classify individuals or organizations as members and non-members of a group based on their actions or ideologies.
 - Teachers could have their classes use Venn Diagrams to identify similarities and differences between different groups or individuals.
- Students struggled to place historical developments in the correct chronological period.
 - Teachers could have students Think/Pair/Share with a list of events to place in time periods.
 - Teachers could have students participate in a gallery walk, adding sticky notes labelled with the names of historical developments to place on posters representing different chronological periods.
 - Teachers could have students add historical developments to a timeline as they proceed through each unit.

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course, including practice SAQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. The formative items are scaffolded so that early items represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and later items become increasingly challenging as teachers progress through the course.
- AP Classroom includes the Teaching and Assessing Modules on Period 8: 1945–1980 and Period 9: 1980–Present, which address the content related to this question.
- The optional activity for Topic 8.8 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#) offers students an opportunity to explore United States foreign policy during the Cold War.
- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 8.2 and 9.3 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#)—such as “The Marshall Plan Speech” and Richard Mills oral history of the

Korean War, as well as Ronald Reagan’s “Radio Address to the Nation on Grenada and Nicaragua”—to discuss Cold War policies.

- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at:
<https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.

Question 1—Document-Based Question

Task: Document-Based Question

Topic: Slavery and United States Society

Max Score: 7

Mean Score: 3.62

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- This question required students to evaluate the extent to which the institution of slavery shaped United States society between 1783 and 1840. The content assesses knowledge of Periods 3 and 4 of the course framework, focusing on the influence of slavery on the United States.
- The intention of the question was to determine if students could evaluate the extent to which slavery affected society in various ways, including how it led to a growing divide in the country. The most frequent historical developments to address were the debates about the ideals and identity of the United States in relation to slavery, the growing regional division between the North and the South, and the moral debates surrounding the question of slavery.
- This question primarily focused on causation, contextualization, analyzing primary sources, and argument development.
- This question primarily addressed Topics 3.6, 3.11, 4.3, and 4.11 through 4.13.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Many responses successfully wrote a historically defensible thesis that identified the ways in which United States society was shaped by the institution of slavery. Most responses tended to focus on the influence of slavery on morality and religion, ideological principles, and economics. More simplistic theses tended to focus on the geographic and/or political division of the country brought about by slavery.
- Most responses successfully provided contextualization. Responses frequently showed an understanding of how colonial economic and labor systems, such as indentured servitude and the *encomienda* system, influenced the development of slavery in the Americas prior to 1840. Responses often explored the decline in the enslavement of Native Americans and the challenges of indentured servitude, as evidenced by Bacon's Rebellion, to explain the move toward increased European colonial enslavement of Africans. Additionally, many responses were able to situate the debate over slavery within the context of revolutionary and Enlightenment ideology concerning the rights of man, with an emphasis on John Locke's ideas about natural rights and the influence of the Declaration of Independence. Several responses also provided contextualization after the time period of the prompt. Such responses were able to connect rising tensions over the institution of slavery to the eventual outbreak of the Civil War and the ultimate abolition of slavery.
- Responses tended to use the content of several of the documents, in particular the decision by William Cushing in *Quock Walker v. Jennison*, Matthew Carey's newspaper article on the Missouri Question, and Richard Furman's defense of slavery. Some student responses misidentified Document 1 as being a discussion of the United States Constitution by a Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court rather than a case involving the Massachusetts State Constitution. Other responses misidentified the quotation from the Declaration of Independence in Documents 1 and 2 as being from the United States Constitution. Document 7 was also frequently misattributed as a discussion of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.

- Responses tended to group the documents on political and ideological arguments about slavery (Documents 1 & 2), religion (Documents 1, 4, & 6), and the distinction between slave and non-slave states (Documents 3 & 7). Some responses also grouped Documents 4, 5, & 6 to make arguments about division over the morality of the institution of slavery. In terms of the arguments offered, responses tended to explore the morality of slavery as seen through religion, the economic arguments in favor of slavery, and the inconsistencies between ideas of freedom and equality and the institution of slavery.
- Responses often did not provide sufficient evidence from beyond the documents. Many responses brought in information from outside the period of the prompt.
- Responses frequently identified the Dred Scott decision, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Bleeding Kansas, and John Brown's raid as if they were occurring within the time frame of the prompt. Responses that did successfully use evidence from outside the documents tended to discuss the usage of the cotton gin, the distinct economies of the North and South, the Underground Railroad, prominent abolitionists, slavery as a “positive good,” and the gag rule. Some responses attempted to use the Missouri Compromise as outside evidence, but because they developed it as the historical situation surrounding Document 3, this frequently was counted as sourcing rather than outside evidence.
- Not all responses explained the documents' point of view, purpose, historical situation, or audience relevant to an argument. Some responses did not attempt to source the documents. Other responses simply summarized the content of the document or reiterated information already provided in the document and/or document source line.
- Responses that did successfully source at least two documents tended to correctly identify the documents' historical situation or point of view. For example, many responses correctly identified the Missouri Compromise as the historical situation of Document 3 and the Enlightenment as the historical situation for the ideas of natural rights in Documents 1 and 2. Other responses correctly juxtaposed the points of view of Richard Furman in Document 4 and Jarena Lee or William Lloyd in Documents 6 or 5, respectively. Stronger responses tended to identify Thomas Jefferson as the audience of Document 2, highlighting the hypocrisy between Jefferson's actions and his words within the Declaration of Independence. It was rare to see a student effectively identify the purpose of a source that went beyond merely restating the content of the document.
- The point for complex understanding was earned in many ways. Most responses that earned the complex understanding point did so for accurately sourcing four or more documents to support their argument, demonstrating their complex understanding through an effective use of evidence to support the arguments made throughout the essay. Some responses used the documents and evidence beyond the documents to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding by analyzing multiple variables outside or across the entire time period of the prompt. Other responses effectively developed arguments and supported them with all seven documents provided with the prompt.

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"> Responses misinterpreted the content of the documents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses clearly understood the documents, such as Document 1. “A note by justice William Cushing in 1783 stated that the institution of slavery was

	contradictory to the idea in state constitutions that the perpetual enslavement of a rational creature was unjust.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses did not use evidence beyond the documents that was within the period of the prompt. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More successful responses used appropriate and relevant evidence from the time period of the prompt. “Outside the documents, people (the South) believed slavery was a ‘positive good.’ The South needed slaves to keep their economy moving since they were purely agricultural based. Since the South relied on slavery, there was a huge split between the free North and the enslaved South.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses simply summarized the content of the document rather than correctly discussing the historical situation, point of view, purpose, and/or audience of the document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stronger responses distinguish between the content of the document and how its intended purpose supports an argument. “In Document 1, William Cushing, a chief justice of the Massachusetts state Supreme Court stated that the idea of slavery isn’t consistent with the constitution. The purpose of this document was to emphasize that the natural rights given to the people by the constitution fails to include enslaved individuals in America. This document built on the idea of the slavery question and the moral concerns of slavery.”

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

- Students struggle with chronology.
 - Teachers should emphasize important events that reinforce chronological reasoning. For example, students should be able to identify that the time period of 1783 to 1840 immediately followed the American Revolution and preceded the Mexican-American War and Civil War. While students do not need to memorize the exact dates of many events in the course, they should practice the order of those events in context with watershed developments.
 - Teachers should have their students focus on the dates of the documents, in particular, the gaps in the dates where students could provide additional evidence beyond the documents and historical contextualization.
- Students struggle with the meaning of the documents.
 - Teachers are encouraged to work with their students on a closer reading of the documents and their relation to an argument.
 - As the document is explored, what are the limitations? What is the point of view that the document provides? How is the document valuable in answering the question? How does the

time period of the document open opportunities for additional contextualization? What prominent historical events were occurring in the midst of the document? How are these documents relevant to an argument?

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessments items for every unit of the course, including practice DBQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. The formative items are scaffolded so that early items represent what students are ready for at the beginning of the school year and later items become increasingly challenging as teachers progress through the course.
- AP Classroom includes the Teaching and Assessing Modules on Period 3: 1754–1800 and Period 4: 1800–1848.
- The optional activities for Topics 3.12, 4.6, and 4.13 in the AP US History [Course Exam Description](#) offer students an opportunity to practice source analysis and connecting evidence with the documents.
- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 3.11 and 4.11 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#), such as the Gowan Pamphlet, as well as the Amistad Case and Maria Stewart’s speech on education for African American women.
- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.

Long Essay Question 2

Task: Long Essay Question

Topic: Conflict between Native Americans and Europeans, 1500 to 1763

Max Score: 6

Mean Score: 3.08

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Responses were expected to demonstrate an understanding of the causes of conflict between the Native peoples of North and South America and Europeans between 1500 and 1763. This timeframe encompassed Spanish exploration and conquest in Mexico and South America, as well as English, French, and Dutch colonization in North America. Responses should demonstrate an understanding of many topics in Units 1 and 2 of the AP US History curriculum.
- Responses could utilize a range of course content, including Native American societies before European contact, European exploration, the Columbian Exchange, the Spanish *encomienda* system, various interactions such as the spread of disease, forced religious conversions, economic exploitation, and conflicts such as Metacom/King Philip’s War, the Pueblo Revolt (Popé’s Rebellion), the Pequot War, the Seven Years War, and Pontiac’s War.
- This question primarily addressed Topics 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.5.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Responses succeeded in using required historical thinking skills, especially causation and comparison, when framing responses making arguments about the causes of conflict between Native Americans and Europeans in the years 1500 to 1763.
- Many responses presented accurate content knowledge on the topic of the prompt, commonly referring to developments such as European territorial expansion, economic goals, and religious differences as drivers of conflict.
- Many students correctly crafted a thesis statement that addressed the prompt and offered a relevant line of reasoning concerning various causes of conflict. Most offered several causes for conflict between Europeans and Native Americans and simply stated that factors such as European desire for land and differences in religion and culture caused conflict to occur. More sophisticated thesis statements generally included multiple causes of conflict. The highest-level theses generally ranked the causes of conflict in order of significance or organized the response by comparing the different approaches to colonization of various European empires and the causes of conflict within each.
- Many responses correctly used the European “Age of Discovery,” Christopher Columbus’s voyages, or the Columbian Exchange as contextualization. More sophisticated responses often included Ottoman conquest of eastern trade routes, the Protestant Reformation, or intra-European competition as contexts of European exploration and beginnings of conflict with the Native American nations.
- Many responses contained strong supporting evidence relevant to the time period. Commonly used examples were the Spanish *encomienda* system, forced conversions to Christianity, and specific outbreaks of violence such as the Pueblo Revolt, Metacom’s/King Philip’s War, the Seven Years’ War, and Pontiac’s War.
- Many responses demonstrated historical reasoning in the form of causation, arguing that various factors drove Native American nations and European empires into a state of conflict. Responses often focused on the *encomienda* system or forced conversions to Christianity causing Native Americans to retaliate against Spanish domination, typically offering the Pueblo Revolt as a

supporting piece of evidence. Many responses also attributed the conflict between Native Americans and Europeans to English colonization and expansion efforts, citing English settlers' desire for land as leading to encroachment on Native territory, resulting in conflicts such as Metacomet's War.

- Some responses demonstrated a sophisticated structure that used the historical thinking skill of comparison instead, comparing in broad terms how the British, French, and Spanish colonizers interacted with Native Americans. These responses generally identified the Spanish Empire as using the *encomienda* system to control Native societies, which drove conflict, and contrasted it with the British colonies push to control more land in North America, which similarly drove Native American-European conflict.
- Students earned the second point for demonstrating a complex understanding in a variety of ways. Often, they identified multiple drivers of Native American-European conflict or compared different European empires across time or geography. Students also earned the complex understanding point by successfully using four pieces of evidence to support a nuanced argument. The most common configuration of this was a discussion of the *encomienda* system, plantation agriculture and forced labor, the Pueblo Revolt, and the Seven Years' War. Many students wrote responses that analyzed not only causes but correctly described the effects of such conflicts on Native Americans specifically. High-level responses also traced the influence that conflicts of the period had on later events, such as the Trail of Tears or the Dawes Act.

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">Many responses attempted to the idea of Manifest Destiny to refer to European territorial expansion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many responses correctly identified European expansion as a primary cause of conflict with Native American tribes but did not use the term "Manifest Destiny" because it developed beyond the time frame of the prompt."[The British] believed it was their right to expand west for agricultural and developmental purposes—thus forcing Natives off of their land. This led to significant conflicts."
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many responses struggled to put events into proper chronological order. This had the effect of confusing the order of events of, for example, the French and Indian War, the Proclamation of 1763, and Pontiac's War.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many responses correctly identified the order of major events in the timeline and used that information in their discussion of the causes and effects of conflicts."One revolt—the Pueblo Revolt—still demonstrates the effect enforced religion/labor had on the Spanish-Native dynamic. The revolt involved the murdering of many Spanish priests and, in retaliation, many members of the Pueblo tribe. The Pueblo were victorious at first, driving the Spanish off their land, but the Spanish came back ten years later. This revolt demonstrates how enforced religion/labor

	caused conflict between Natives and Europeans.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses struggled to identify clear themes around which to structure their argument. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses organized their arguments around economic factors, arguing that they were a significant cause of conflict between Native Americans and Europeans. “The nature of mercantilism allowed countries such as Great Britain to exploit raw goods from colonies, allowing them to strengthen their economies compared to other European Nations. Specifically backed by the Virginia Company, settlers had to reap profit on the shared gamble they took in coming to the Americas. However, as they required more land to farm tobacco, they caused conflict.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some responses structured their argument by attempting to explain the events leading to the American Revolution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses might include a claim that British-Native American conflict was a driver of imperial policies that did eventually lead to the American Revolution, focusing on such conflicts and their causes prior to the American Revolution. “Poor relations led to conflicts such as Metacomet’s War, the Pontiac conflict, and Native Americans siding with the French in the Seven Years War. These conflicts cost exorbitant amounts of money and hurt England’s economy. This debt the British faced is what led to their leaving soldiers in the colonies after the Seven Years War, the end of salutary neglect, and the implementing of taxes on the colonies that led to the American Revolution.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses used assimilation of Native peoples as a cause of conflict in the colonial era, incorrectly focusing on examples such as the Dawes Act and the Carlisle School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses typically contrasted British efforts to remove Native Americans from their homelands, while mentioning early efforts toward assimilation that were accurate for the time period. “Britain was far from amicable with the Natives. They stole land, pillaged villages, and went back on agreements they made with local bands. Prayer towns did not help with the tension between Native Americans and the British.”

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

- Some students were unable to write a thesis that laid out a line of reasoning or correctly addressed the prompt.
 - Teachers could begin by showing students a minimally acceptable thesis from [past exams](#) teachers and ask them to develop further lines of reasoning. After this activity students should be able to draft their own thesis with these examples in mind.
- Some students attempted to contextualize their responses with information that was outside the time period or not specific enough.
 - Teachers could ensure that students can describe multiple relevant developments before, during, and after each unit so that they have a broad pool of prior knowledge to use for contextualizing events.
- Some students struggled to correctly identify the proper chronological order of major events.
 - Teachers could use timeline activities and chronological sorting games to make sure that students have a firm grasp of the order of major events. This will also aid students in using the historical skills of causation and analyzing change and continuity.
- Some students did not attempt to use the historical skill of causation to draft a response.
 - Teachers should ensure that classroom activities address the full range of historical skills relevant to the curriculum. Students should be able to make an argument that a historical development was caused by a specific event, for example “British colonialism was caused by the search for new economic opportunities and competition with the empires of France and Spain.”
- Many students treated Native American tribal societies as monolithic or emphasized their peaceful nature before European contact.
 - Teachers should work to complicate student understanding of Native American societies. Students should understand that many different religions, economies, and lifeways developed across the American continents before Europeans arrived, that all three were dynamic, and that Native nations were organized into many different political structures that involved competition and conflict prior to contact with Europeans. Emphasizing these topics and ideas will give students a richer understanding of the past.

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course, including practice LEQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. These formative LEQs gradually increase in complexity as the year progresses.
- AP Classroom includes Teaching and Assessing Modules on Period 1: 1491–1607, Period 2: 1607–1754 and Period 3: 1754–1800, which address the content and skills related to this question.
- The AP Daily Videos in AP Classroom for Topics 1.4, 1.5, 2.2, 2.5, and 3.2, among others, review some of the content and skills related to this question. The optional activity for Topic 2.2 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#) offers students an early opportunity to practice the skill of comparison.

- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 1.4 and 2.5, among others, in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#). In Topic 1.4, Lion Gardener’s recollection of Miantonomi’s call for an alliance against Europeans demonstrates the ways that the desire for new land and introduction of new animals led to conflict between Europeans and Native Americans. In Topic 2.5 historian Ned Blackhawk discusses Spanish and Ute relations during the mid-1700s within the complex network of relationships in the American Southwest.
- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.

Long Essay Question 3

Task: Long Essay Question

Topic: Nineteenth-Century Growth of National Culture

Max Score: 6

Mean Score: 3.17

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- This question asked students to evaluate the relative importance of the causes of the growth of a national culture in the United States from 1800–1848.
- Responses could utilize a wide range of content knowledge, including the market revolution, the growth of party politics, the Second Great Awakening, Romanticism, and the Age of Reform.
- This question mainly addressed Topics 4.1, 4.2, 4.3., 4.7, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12 and 4.13.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Many students demonstrated an understanding of the causes of the growth of national culture.
- For the thesis point, responses were required to address the causes of the growth of national culture by providing a historically defensible claim with a line of reasoning or by establishing analytical categories. However, some responses only focused on the effects of the growth of culture or misconstrued national growth for growth of national culture and therefore did not receive the thesis point.
- Many responses discussed the broader concepts of the American Revolution as a catalyst for the development of national culture and received the point for contextualization.
- Responses answered this question with an abundance of evidence. Key examples included: Manifest Destiny, railroads, the Second Great Awakening, canals, Transcendentalism, the Louisiana Purchase, the Monroe Doctrine, the industrial revolution, Jacksonian Democracy, Native American forced removal, the War of 1812, and the Mexican-American War. Due to the abundance of evidence, responses often earned the first point for evidence. However, many responses struggled to use that wealth of evidence to support an argument relevant to the prompt sufficient enough to earn the second evidence point.
- Since the question could be approached using causation, many responses earned a point in Analysis and Reasoning, using historical reasoning to frame an argument about how the idea of Manifest Destiny contributed to expansion from “sea to sea,” leading to national culture.
- Sophisticated responses were able to earn the point for complex understanding through different pathways. Some responses demonstrated sophisticated argumentation by examining debates in multiple time periods and regions. Some responses demonstrated an effective use of evidence by discussing the evolving ways in which transportation infrastructure contributed to national unity throughout the period. A few responses examined the role of transportation infrastructure as both an agent of national unity, connecting disparate parts of the nation through trade and transportation routes, and an agent of national disunity, contributing to divisions by fostering divergent regional economic systems.

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"> Many responses exhibited a general misunderstanding or confusion over chronology, describing events after the period in an attempt to provide supporting evidence for an argument within the period (such as the California gold rush, <i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i>, and the Compromise of 1850). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses specified events within the period such as the Revolution of 1800, the Louisiana Purchase, or Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Mexican-American War.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses exhibited a general misunderstanding or confusion between the Mexican-American War and the Spanish-American War 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses included sophisticated usage of evidence and argument connecting Manifest Destiny and the Mexican-American War. "The Mexican-American war was another example of how manifest destiny united the US. while Lincoln's Spot Resolutions called into question the legitimacy of President James Polk's declaration of war against Mexico—it was for concern regarding slavery in new territories, not expansionism. Once it was clear the US was the dominant power following their victory and the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, there was no more opposition to the war. Americans had instilled within their culture a right to the western hemisphere, its peoples, territories, and riches."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses lacked clarity in describing what, precisely, is meant by the term "national culture." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses defined culture, and in some cases, described how "national identity" and/or "patriotism" are linked to "national culture." "The causes of growth of national culture in the U.S. would be people being able to work, women having the right to vote, workers getting a higher chance of pay, and so much more that occurred during the 1800's to 1848."

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

- Teach students to appropriately place historical events, individuals, groups, etc. within time periods.
 - For example, as a daily bellringer, randomly select a term and ask students to place it in the appropriate period.
- Ensure that students can articulate the difference between the causes and the effects of a historical event or development.

- Have students make notecards that identify either a cause or an effect of a historical event, movement or development. Have them draw a card from the deck and identify it as either a cause or an effect, and present a rationale using at least one piece of evidence
- Teachers can provide opportunities for students to practice change over time and chronological reasoning through timelines and reinforcement of the course’s nine time periods.
- Using sample responses and scoring guidelines from [past exams](#) teachers can give students a minimally acceptable thesis and ask them to develop further lines of reasoning.
- Teach students to use evidence with understanding; “name dropping” is insufficient to build an effective argument.
 - This is a great issue to address with drafts. Mark a “name drop” in a rough draft and ask the student to flesh out the significance of the evidence and tie it to the argument in a subsequent draft.

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course, including practice LEQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. These formative LEQs gradually increase in complexity as the year progresses.
- AP Classroom includes Teaching and Assessing Modules on Period 4: 1800–1848 and Period 5: 1844–1877, which address the content and skills related to this question.
- The AP Daily Videos in AP Classroom for Topics 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, and 4.12, among others, review some of the content and skills related to this question.
- The optional activity for Topic 4.9 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#) offers students an early opportunity to practice the skill of contextualization in relation to the growth of a national culture.
- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 4.9 and 4.12, among others, in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#). In Topic 4.9 Robert Duncanson’s *Hunting in the Woods* and Thomas Cole’s *Landscape*, demonstrate the focus on depictions of wilderness and frontier to American culture. Excerpts from the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Fuller, Washington Irving and Edgar Allan Poe demonstrate the growth of a range of national literary cultures during this era. Historian Tiya Miles’ discussion of African American and Native American lives in Topic 4.12 highlights the multiple ways in which culture developed during the antebellum era.
- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at: <https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.

Long Essay Question 4

Task: Long Essay Question

Topic: Effects of Movements for Social Change

Max Score: 6

Mean Score: 3.57

What were the responses to this question expected to demonstrate?

- Responses were expected to demonstrate knowledge of how movements for social change from 1945 to 1980 impacted the nation.
- Responses could utilize a wide range of content knowledge, including reasons for and effects of the Civil Rights movement, the feminist movement, the Chicano movement, Asian American activism, Native American activism, the gay rights movement, environmentalism, anti-war activism, Beatnik culture, the counterculture, consumer protection advocacy, the Moral Majority, the Great Society and War on Poverty, conformity and fear of communism, the growth of liberalism, and conservative activism of the New Right.
- Although responses to this question could have used most topics during Period 8: 1945–1980, most focused on Topics 8.6, 8.10, and 8.11.
- This question primarily focused on the causation and change over time skills.

How well did the responses address the course content related to this question? How well did the responses integrate the skill(s) required on this question?

- Responses succeeded in meeting many of the content demands of the question while demonstrating the required historical thinking skills in framing responses that made arguments about the effects of movements for social change in the United States from 1945 to 1980.
- The more common content knowledge used in the responses focused on African American Civil Rights movement, the feminist movement, and the gay rights movement. Responses often demonstrated accurate content knowledge on the topic of the prompt, commonly referencing developments such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his “I Have a Dream” speech, the Voting Rights Act, the Civil Rights Acts of 1957, 1960, and 1964, Malcolm X, the Black Panthers, Betty Friedan and *The Feminine Mystique*, the Equal Rights Amendment, Phyllis Schlafly, *Roe v. Wade*, the Stonewall riots, and early Pride events.
- Responses showed a high degree of success in framing an appropriate historical thesis in response to the prompt. The most common incorrect thesis attempts were either restating the prompt without a line of reasoning or failing to clearly address an effect of a movement for social change.
- Responses showed a high degree of success with contextualization. The most common contextualization focused on *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Jim Crow, the Nineteenth Amendment, and the Second World War. Many others focused on reactions to Cold War policies, the end of the Great Depression and the post-war economic boom, and the baby boom.
- Responses most commonly demonstrated historical reasoning of causation to frame an argument that addressed the effects of movements for social change. A much smaller number of responses addressed continuity and change.
- Analytic shortcomings of responses included the overgeneralization of specific movements such as describing the Civil Rights or feminist movements as wanting change rather than discussing the effects of the movements’ actions. Responses also suffered from the incorrect placement of developments such as *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the Reconstruction Amendments, the Seneca Falls

Convention, the Nineteenth Amendment, access to birth control, and the AIDS crisis as occurring in the period 1945 to 1980.

- The point for demonstrating a complex understanding was earned in a variety of ways. The most common ways included analyzing the effects of multiple movements demonstrating multiple perspectives, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of the resistance to movements such anti-integration activities, conservative responses to the counterculture and feminism, or the use of multiple pieces of specific evidence in a nuanced way to analyze one movement. Comparatively few responses successfully made insightful connections within and across time periods.

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">Many responses asserted, rather than explained, the importance of one effect over another.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Better responses had a thesis statement that explained how or why the effects of one movement were more important than another.“Civil Rights movement and the Feminist movement were two important movements for social change from 1945–1980. The Civil Rights movement was more important than the Feminist movement because it resulted in more legislation for equality.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many responses mistakenly referenced the Cold War as a movement for social change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Better responses showed complex understanding by discussing the Cold War as a cause of the Second Red Scare, 1950s conformity, the anti-war movement of the 1960s, or the distrust of government in the 1970s.“America practiced a policy of containment during the Cold War. . . . When America sent thousands of drafted young soldiers to Vietnam to die, it caused a public upset. The SDS is one group that protest. College student and young because politically and socially engaged which led to 18 year olds getting the right to vote.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Many responses had a chronological misconception regarding developments from prior periods, discussing them as if they occurred during the period from 1945 to 1980.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Better responses used developments from earlier eras to contextualize the topic of the prompt or to make insightful connections to another era, showing a complex understanding.“Following the failure of Reconstruction, Jim Crow laws set out to discriminate African Americans for decades. Following WWII these laws were challenged and African Americans gained new rights and liberties.”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses discussed both Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X in general terms of fighting discrimination but did not discuss the effects of their actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses compared the two approaches of these leaders while also explaining their similar motives. “While Martin Luther King favored non violence as an approach, Malcolm X advocated for self defense even if it included violence.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses generalized feminism as a women’s movement without specifying the goals or effects of the movement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses explained feminism of the 1950s through 1970s by identifying specific goals and accomplishments in the workplace, education, and reproductive rights. “Inspired by Feminine Mystique women fought for more equal pay and equal opportunities in sports. This led to Title IX and the decision of Roe v Wade which legalized abortion.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses generalized the Chicano movement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses provided specific examples of activists or protests that led to changes. “Following the Civil Rights movement using the same non-violent strategies of MLK leaders like Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta organized migrant farm workers to strike for higher wages and better working conditions which they achieved following successful boycotts.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses generalized the environmental movement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses explained changes in government policy as a result of public environmental awareness and activism. “Following the release of Silent Spring by Rachel Carson many began to call for more environmental protection and regulation. This led to the environment movement which held great political importance. One effect was the creation of the Clear Air and Water Acts showing how this movement led to political change as laws began to cater to the protection of the environment.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses misidentified the Nineteenth Amendment as being ratified between 1945 and 1980. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses referenced the Nineteenth Amendment in their contextualization. “In 1920 the 19th Amendment was passed which gave women the right to vote and led to further activism.”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses misidentified legal protection of gay marriage as occurring within the period of 1945 to 1980. Better responses referenced <i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i> as an insightful connection across time periods showing complex understanding. “The gay rights movement after Stonewall took longer to achieve equality than African Americans did following MLK’s I Have a Dream. It wasn’t until Obama’s presidency that gay marriage was legalized. Obama also removed the don’t ask don’t tell restrictions from the military.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses failed to acknowledge the American Indian Movement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses recognized the ways Native Americans demanded social and economic equality and the redress of past injustices. “Like African Americans the American Indian Movement also fought for equality and protested government control of their land. They occupied Alcatraz a former federal prison and other lands they wanted back from the government. They didn’t get land back but later were able to gain rights to have casinos on their land.”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many responses failed to acknowledge Asian American social activism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better responses recognize the ways Asian Americans demanded equality and redress for internment during the Second World War. “Younger Asian American demanded an end to segregation and discrimination in the workplace by following the footsteps of groups like the Black Panthers. The Japanese Americans also demanded an apology for interment during WWII which they did get along with \$20,000.”

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

- Although most students earned the baseline thesis point, students should be encouraged to clearly develop a line of reasoning with specific evidence.
 - When teaching the skill of writing basic thesis statements encourage students to take three steps to build a strong thesis. The first step is to use the specific wording of the prompt to start their thesis. This step helps students ensure to address the full prompt. The second step is to address the qualifier. This prompt had a qualifier of “relative importance.” The thesis point can be earned without addressing the qualifier, but this is an important skill in historical analysis. The final step is to provide a line of reasoning. It is this final step that can make the most difference between a strong and weak thesis.
- Teachers can work to help students move beyond generalizations while contextualizing the topic of the prompt.

- Encourage students to center their context on an explicit event or development. For example, instead of saying, “During this time period, many groups of people were discriminated against in schools and in jobs,” include an example of a group or an example of discrimination. “Following the Second World War, African Americans were still experiencing discrimination due to Jim Crow laws” is a much stronger contextualization.
- Teachers can work to help students present their evidence explicitly and offer explanations. For example, the common use of “Civil Rights movement” can be developed beyond just a description by making a connection to the prompt, which is about the effects of movements for social change. Encourage students to include how and why the movement had an effect, which would improve the response.
 - “Closing the loop” is a commonly used phrase to remind students to clearly support an argument. In an essay discussing the effects of the Civil Rights Movement, for example, consideration of *how* the movement affected society can lead to stronger “loops”: “The Civil Rights Movement led to decreased discrimination when *Brown v. Board of Education* made segregation in public schools unconstitutional.”
- Teachers can work to help students avoid using absolutes. Absolutes lead to an oversimplification of history. For example, “Movements for social change led to the end of all racial discrimination.” This is weak analysis and is not historically defensible. Simply replacing “all” with “several forms” improves the quality of the analysis.
- Teachers can work to help students embrace the many pathways to complex understanding. Helping students understand and practice these various ways to earn this point can open their minds to higher-level analysis. Spending time practicing this skill can also help address the incorrect perspective that this point is too difficult to even attempt. The point for complex understanding is doable. It is earned by going beyond a simple or basic argument.
 - Encourage students to break down an essay prompt by describing the most basic responses to the prompt. Then ask students to identify ways they can go beyond such responses. The basic response to this prompt addresses the effects of movements for social change from 1945 to 1980. Going beyond that argument might be to also address the causes of those movements, connecting the movements to earlier or later eras, or providing nuance about the relevance of certain causal factors (i.e., Which causes were more or less important? Why?).

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

Consider taking advantage of the following resources to help students prepare for the content and skills required in this question:

- In AP Classroom teachers will find a rich collection of resources. These resources include formative and summative assessment items for every unit of the course, including practice LEQs for teachers to use as formative assessment pieces. These formative LEQs gradually increase in complexity as the year progresses.
- AP Classroom includes Teaching and Assessing Module on Period 8: 1945–1980, which addresses the content and skills related to this question.
- The AP Daily Videos in AP Classroom for Topics 8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 8.10, 8.11, 8.12, and 8.13, among others, review some of the content and skills related to this question.
- The optional activity for Topic 8.10 in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#) offers students an early opportunity to practice the skill of making connections in relation to movements for social change.
- Teachers may utilize some of the optional sources for Topics 8.6 and 8.11, among others, in the [AP US History Course and Exam Description](#). In Topic 8.6, Claudette Colvin is interviewed about her

experience in the Civil Rights movement, and Peter Tijerina discusses the importance of the *Hernandez v. Texas* case. Robert Duncanson's *Hunting in the Woods* and Thomas Cole's *Landscape* demonstrate the focus on depictions of wilderness and frontier to American culture. In Topic 8.11 historian Daryl Joji Maeda outlines the origins and effects of the Asian American Movement, and historian Kent Blansett discusses the effects of the Red Power and American Indian Movements.

- The online AP Teacher Community includes a library of resources that can be found at:
<https://apcommunity.collegeboard.org/group/apushistory/resource-library/>.