

Exam Overview

The AP African American Studies Exam assesses student understanding of the skills and learning objectives outlined in the course framework. In addition to the end-of-course exam, students will complete an Individual Student Project by May 31. Students will present their project in class and will then respond to questions about their findings as they engage in an oral defense of their project.

The end-of-course exam is 2 hours 45 minutes long and includes 60 multiple-choice questions and four free-response questions. Additionally, the exam will include one exam day validation question about the student project. This question will be similar to one of the sample project oral defense questions, but students will respond in writing to this question on the exam.

Teachers will score their students' project presentation and oral defense using a rubric provided by AP. The project score and the exam score are combined to generate an AP score of 1–5 for college credit and placement. The details of the exam can be found below:

Section	Type of Questions	Number of Questions	Exam Weighting	Time
I	Multiple-Choice Questions	60	60%	70 minutes
IB	Individual Student Project: Exam Day Validation Question	1	1.5%	10 minutes
II	Short-Answer Questions	3	18%	40 minutes (suggested)
	Document-Based Question	1	12%	45 minutes (suggested) minutes total
	Individual Student Project: Teacher-Scored Component		8.5%	Recommended minimum of 15 instructional hours (15 class periods or 3 instructional weeks)

How Student Learning Is Assessed on the AP Exam

All three AP African American Studies skills are assessed on every AP Exam in the multiple-choice section and free-response section as well as in the Individual Student Project as detailed below.

	Multiple-Choice Questions	Free-Response Questions	Individual Student Project
Skill 1: Applying Disciplinary Knowledge	Set-based multiple-choice questions assess students' ability to explain course concepts, developments, patterns, and processes (e.g., cultural, historical, political, social). Students will explain patterns, connections, or other relationships, including continuities, changes, similarities, differences, and causation. Additionally, students will need to explain how course concepts, developments, and processes relate to the discipline of African American Studies.	All three short-answer questions and the document-based question assess Skill 1.	The project assesses Skill 1.
Skill 2: Source Analysis	Set-based multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to evaluate written and visual sources, including historical documents, literary texts, music lyrics, tables, charts, graphs, maps, surveys, infographics, works of art, and/or material culture. Students will need to identify and explain a source's claim, evidence, and reasoning. Additionally, students will need to describe a source's perspective, purpose, context, and audience, as well as explain its significance. Additionally, students will need to describe and draw conclusions from patterns, trends, and limitations in data, making connections to relevant course content.	The two source-based short-answer questions and the document-based question assess Skill 2.	The project assesses Skill 2.
Skill 3: Argumentation	Set-based multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to identify, infer, and/or support a claim using specific and relevant evidence.	At least one of the short-answer questions, as well as the document-based question, will assess students' ability to formulate and/or support a claim using specific and relevant evidence.	The project assesses student ability to establish a research topic and, through strategic selection and in-depth investigation of varied sources, develop a presentation that compares the content and perspectives of specific and relevant evidence from the selected sources.

Multiple-Choice Section

The first section of the AP African American Studies Exam includes 60 multiple-choice questions (MCQ) appearing in sets of typically three or four questions per set. Each MCQ set includes one or two sources which serve as stimulus material for the questions in the set. Up to half of the source material included in the multiple-choice section will be drawn from required sources in the course framework. The remaining sources will be related to required course content, but will not be sources that students will have directly studied as required content in the course. Across each multiple-choice set as a whole, multiple learning objectives and essential knowledge statements will be assessed. Each set includes question(s) that focus on the source material explicitly, as well as question(s) that move beyond the source, making connections to related course content.

The multiple-choice section includes 13–14 sets with a single source as stimulus, including the following source types:

- Text: historical primary
- Text: literary
- Text: secondary
- Data: map, chart, table, or graph
- Image: art or architecture
- Image: historical or map

Four to five multiple-choice sets in the multiple-choice section include two paired sources as stimulus. These pairings may include two sources of the same type (e.g., two texts), or two sources of varied types (e.g., one text and one image).

Free-Response Section

The second section of the AP African American Studies Exam includes one project exam day validation question, three short-answer questions, and one document-based question. Two of the short-answer questions will be based on a source (one of the questions will be based on a text; one of them will be based on a visual) and one of them will not be based on a source.

PROJECT EXAM DAY VALIDATION QUESTION

This question will present students with the opportunity to respond in writing to one of the project oral defense questions. Students will be asked to provide analysis, reflection, comparison, or evaluation of at least one of the sources they used for their course project. Project oral defense questions can be found on page 398 of the Individual Student Project Teacher’s Manuals.

SOURCE-BASED SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

Each of these two short-answer questions presents students with one source (or, occasionally, two closely related sources), and consists of three or four question parts per question. One of these questions will use a required source as stimulus. The other question will use a source that is related to required course content, but will not be a source that students will have directly studied as required content in the course. Each of these short-answer questions will assess multiple learning objectives and essential knowledge statements. Each question will include the following:

- At least one question part that directly assesses the source and its associated content;
- At least one question part that moves beyond the source to assess related course content; and
- At least one question part that assesses student ability to make thematic, chronological, or multidisciplinary connections across the course framework.

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTION (NO SOURCE)

This short-answer question presents students with a broad thematic concept that recurs throughout multiple course units. In at least one of the question parts students will be assessed on their ability to provide specific examples related to the thematic concept. In at least one of the question parts students will be asked to do one or more of the following:

- explain causality (causes or effects)
- contextualize
- compare (explain similarities or differences)
- explain continuities or changes over time
- explain significance or importance

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

The document-based question presents students with five documents offering various perspectives on a historical development or process. The question requires students to do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical or disciplinary context relevant to the topic of the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least three of the sources.
- Use at least one additional piece of specific evidence (beyond the evidence found in the sources) relevant to your argument.
- For at least two sources, explain how or why the perspective, purpose, context, and/or audience for each source is relevant to your argument.
- Reference or cite the sources you use in your argument. You can reference or cite the source letter, title, or author.

The topic of the document-based question will be within the scope of the required content in the Course Framework.