

2025



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

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Short-Answer Question 3

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Question 3: Short Answer No Stimulus**3 points****General Scoring Notes**

- Each point is earned independently.
- **Accuracy:** These scoring guidelines require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.
- **Clarity:** Exam responses should be considered first drafts and thus may contain grammatical errors. Those errors will not be counted against a student unless they obscure the successful demonstration of the content knowledge, skills, and practices described below.
- **Describe:** Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic. Description requires more than simply mentioning an isolated term.
- **Explain:** Provide information about how or why a historical development or process occurs or how or why a relationship exists.

A Describe one significant motivation for European overseas expansion in the period 1450 to 1600. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- European overseas expansion was often motivated by the desire to spread Christianity, especially in Catholic Spain and Portugal.
- Europeans wanted to find commodities like precious metals and spices.
- Competition between the Portuguese and the Spanish motivated both nations to colonize other lands.

B Describe one significant change in European overseas expansion in the period 1600 to 1700. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- In the 1600s, powers like England, France, and the Netherlands became more active in colonization.
 - Spanish and Portuguese dominance began to decline in the 1600s.
 - Principles of mercantilism encouraged European states to extract as much wealth from colonies as possible.
 - The risks and complexity of long-distance trade led to the creation of more sophisticated financial institutions such as joint-stock companies.
 - There was an increased reliance on slavery in the transatlantic or triangular trade.
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- C** Explain one way that European overseas expansion affected Europe’s economy in the period 1700 to 1900. **1 point**

Examples of acceptable responses may include the following:

- Overseas expansion, global trade, and colonial settlement increased the wealth of the European commercial classes because it opened new markets for their goods.
 - The European economy benefitted from the raw materials exported from the colonies because they were essential to industrial production.
 - As industrialization expanded across Europe, foreign countries began to provide new markets for European manufactured goods, encouraging competition between European states for imperial territory.
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Sample 3A 1 of 1

A. European overseas expansion was largely motivated by the ideals of Christianity, specifically the notion of spreading it and salvation. Missionaries were used to spread the "Glory of God", and when explorers such as Columbus arrived in the new world they brought priests with them. Kings and explorers wanted to further the mission of God in the world, and they thought overseas expansion proved to be an opportunity for this.

B. In this period, the main European powers furthering expansion began to change. Spain was coming out of its dominance as Dutch East India company established trade worldwide, and introduced the concept of "stock" in companies. Britain also had its international role expanded. The main source of new European colonialism therefore shifted from the Iberian peninsula to the low countries and the UK.

C. The increased supply of raw materials from colonies as well as capital from trade allowed European nations to industrialize. This industry led to European economy's industrialization, increasing the amount of products they produced and fueling economic growth. This industrial revolution further encouraged the development of capitalism as an economic theory, and the two factors led to the Victorian Age in England and the evolution of Europe's economy in the period 1700 to 1900.

Sample 3B 1 of 1

A.) One motivation for European expansions overseas in the period 1450 to 1600 was the goal for Spain and Portugal to reach the Spice Islands, this led to Portugal setting up trade routes along Africa and India and Spain finding more land in the Americas which led to the discovery of gold and silver.

B.) One change in European expansion in the period 1600 to 1700 was the change in beliefs it brought with it. With the new discovery of this new world, people began to question the church and their systems. With a whole other land mass out there the people in Europe questioned if the church really knew it all from god because if they did know how were they not aware of the land across the sea. This helped fuel the Protestant Reformation and the fixation of the church in Europe.

C.) One way that the overseas expansion affected Europeans economy in the period 1700 to 1900 was the amount of wealth it brought to countries like the United Kingdom, France, and other major countries. With the Industrial Revolution, these countries sought out more gain and materials from other places. This led to imperialistic expansions in Africa and other islands around the world. The gain in resources helped the Industrial Revolution grow and helped the European market grow which in turn caused an economic boom for these European countries.

Sample 3C 1 of 1

A. One significant motivation for European overseas expansion was the desire for religious converts. In Europe, the Protestant Reformation was well underway, challenging traditional beliefs imposed by the Catholic Church and weakening its power. In response, the Catholic Church sponsored overseas expansion and sent missionaries to foreign lands in an attempt to gain more converts to oppose Protestant believers.

B. European overseas expansion, throughout the seventeenth century, experienced significant changes in the technology used for such expansion. For example, developments in maritime technology, such as the lateen sail and magnetic compass, improved the efficiency of sailing and thus increased the number of exploration efforts made in European countries.

C. European overseas expansion resulted in European nations gaining much more material wealth than it ever had prior to the eighteenth century. For example, as Spanish forces conquered lands in the Americas, they were able to extract crops and silver from the lands they overtook, resulting in Spain accumulating a large amount of wealth and economic growth.

Short Answer Question 3

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

Overview

NEW for 2025: The question overviews can be found in the *Chief Reader Report on Student Responses on AP Central*.

Sample: 3A

SAQ Part A Score: 1

SAQ Part B Score: 1

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Score: 3

The response earned the point for Part A by describing religious motivations of missionaries, explorers, and monarchs for expansion into the New World.

The response earned the point for Part B by describing change in expansion by highlighting the decline of Spain, the rise of the Dutch East India Company, and the expansion of Great Britain.

The response earned the point for Part C by explaining the impact of expansion on the European economy through the supply of colonial raw materials to Europe during the Industrial Revolution and the development of capitalism.

Sample: 3B

SAQ Part A Score: 1

SAQ Part B Score: 0

SAQ Part C Score: 1

Score: 2

The response earned the point for Part A by describing the motivations of Spain and Portugal for new trade routes to Asia, Africa, and the Americas, as well as the search for gold and silver.

The response did not earn the point for Part B because the description of religious issues does not adequately address changes in European expansion.

The response earned the point for Part C by explaining how increased wealth of European countries due to expansion and industrialization drove further imperialistic expansion into Africa and other areas, causing an economic boom in Europe.

Short Answer Question 3 (continued)

Sample: 3C

SAQ Part A Score: 1

SAQ Part B Score: 0

SAQ Part C Score: 0

Score: 1

The response earned the point for Part A by describing Catholic motivations for sending missionaries to foreign lands to gain converts.

The response did not earn the point for Part B because the technology described occurs prior to 1600.

The response did not earn the point for Part C because the discussion about Spain refers to events before 1700 and does not provide sufficient evidence after 1700 to explain the impact of expansion on the European economy.