

2025



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

Inside:

Long Essay Question 3

- Scoring Guidelines**
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- Scoring Commentary**

Question 3: Long Essay Question, Differences in the Arts 1750 to 1950

6 points

General Scoring Notes

- Except where otherwise noted, each point of these rubrics is earned independently; for example, a student could earn a point for evidence without earning a point for thesis/claim.
- **Accuracy:** The components of these rubrics require that students demonstrate historically defensible content knowledge. Given the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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 essays 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.

Evaluate the most significant difference between approaches to the arts in the period from 1750 to 1850 and approaches to the arts in the period from 1850 to 1950.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p>Row A Thesis/Claim (0–1 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes		
<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not historically defensible. • Only restate or rephrase the prompt. • Do not respond to the prompt. • Do not establish a line of reasoning. • Are overgeneralized. 		<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a historically defensible thesis or claim about the most significant difference between approaches to the arts in the period 1750 to 1850 and in the period 1850 to 1950. The thesis or claim must either provide some indication of the reason for making that claim OR establish categories of the argument.
<p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Provide a restatement of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“There were lots of big differences between the arts in these two periods.”</i> <p>Provide a historically defensible claim, but do not establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The arts shifted in response to social shifts among those who bought and appreciated artwork.”</i> <p>Are not historically defensible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“A big difference between the arts of the two periods was that in the later period there was a complete abandonment of realistic portrayals of people or objects.”</i> 		<p>Examples that earn this point:</p> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“While art in the period 1750 to 1850 typically strived to depict recognizable subjects, beginning with Impressionism and especially in the 20th century, artists chose to experiment with light and space.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt with analytic categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Artists’ purpose shifted from trying to portray the objective and the ideal to portraying the subjective and the real.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Unlike the early period, art of the later period broke conventional rules of traditional art.”</i> [Minimally acceptable thesis/claim]
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thesis or claim must consist of one or more sentences located in one place, either in the introduction or the conclusion (which may not be limited to the first or last paragraphs). • The thesis or claim must identify a relevant development(s) in the period, although it is not required to encompass the entire period. 		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
<p>Row B Contextualization (0–1 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.</p>		
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. • Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. • Provide a passing phrase or reference. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Do not provide context relevant to the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Medieval art was almost entirely religious.”</i> <p>Provide a passing phrase or reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Enlightenment was important in the earlier period.”</i> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately describe a context relevant to approaches to the arts in the period 1750 to 1950. <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renaissance techniques of geometric perspective • The spread of affordable print materials; rise in literacy rates • Royal, aristocratic, church patronage of the arts • The growth of nationalism and Romanticism • The French Revolution and Napoleonic wars • The Industrial Revolution and social problems that emerged as a result of mass urbanization and class conflict • New Imperialism and the expansion of European settlement across the world • The Scientific Revolution [anatomical studies and discoveries] • The Enlightenment • The First and Second World Wars <p>Example of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Romantic movement was fueled by the rise of nationalist sentiments following the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars.”</i> • <i>“Artists had flocked to Paris for centuries because of its opportunities and support for the arts.”</i> [Minimally acceptable contextualization] </td> </tr> </table>			<p>Responses that do not earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt. • Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt. • Provide a passing phrase or reference. <p>Examples that do not earn this point:</p> <p>Do not provide context relevant to the topic of the prompt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Medieval art was almost entirely religious.”</i> <p>Provide a passing phrase or reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Enlightenment was important in the earlier period.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately describe a context relevant to approaches to the arts in the period 1750 to 1950. <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renaissance techniques of geometric perspective • The spread of affordable print materials; rise in literacy rates • Royal, aristocratic, church patronage of the arts • The growth of nationalism and Romanticism • The French Revolution and Napoleonic wars • The Industrial Revolution and social problems that emerged as a result of mass urbanization and class conflict • New Imperialism and the expansion of European settlement across the world • The Scientific Revolution [anatomical studies and discoveries] • The Enlightenment • The First and Second World Wars <p>Example of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Romantic movement was fueled by the rise of nationalist sentiments following the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars.”</i> • <i>“Artists had flocked to Paris for centuries because of its opportunities and support for the arts.”</i> [Minimally acceptable contextualization]
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<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response must describe broader historical events, developments, or processes that occur before, during, or continue after the time frame of the question that are relevant to the topic of the prompt. • To earn this point, the context provided must be more than a phrase or reference. 				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria					
Row C Evidence (0–2 points)	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Provides specific examples of at least two pieces of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.	2 points Supports an argument in response to the prompt using at least two pieces of specific and relevant evidence.			
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes						
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>Responses that do not earn points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a single piece of evidence. • Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic of the prompt. • Provide evidence that is outside the time period or region specified in the prompt. • Repeat information that is specified in the prompt. <p>Examples that do not earn points:</p> <p>Provide evidence outside the time period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The religious conflict of the Reformation led many Protestants to be suspicious of artwork since they thought it could lead to idolatry and superstition.”</i> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>Responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify at least two specific historical examples relevant to approaches to the arts in the period 1750 to 1950. <p>Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art styles and movements before 1850 [Rococo, Baroque, Neo-Classicism, Romanticism] • Art styles and movements after 1850 [Academic painting, Impressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, Dadaism, Futurism, Existentialism] • Specific examples of artists and their works • Realism as social critique • Expressionism and attempts to portray subjective internal states of mind • Effects of World War I, “the lost generation” • The increase in depictions of non-European subjects as a result of colonial expansion • Mass media <p>Example of a statement that earns one point for evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Romantic artists and writers often set their works in the idyllic countryside to further their themes of emotion and beauty, while the later Realists favored the grit and grime of the cities and factories to push for social reform.”</i> </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>Responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use at least two specific historical examples to support an argument regarding the most significant difference between approaches to the arts in the period 1750 to 1850 and 1850 to 1950. <p>Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Picasso’s Guernica is a good example of the changed approach to arts. The painting uses non-realistic Cubist technique to portray the horror and confusion of war inflicted on innocent civilians.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about the new approaches to art in the later period] • <i>“The art of the earlier period, for example, Neo-Classicism retained certain idealism and optimism, while later art was more about realism or, like Dadaism, disenchantment with the ruling elites.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about differences in philosophies around the arts] • <i>“Art before 1850 usually depicted wealthy people or idealized scenes, while art after 1850, especially Realism, focused on the everyday reality of ordinary people.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about different themes and ideals of the arts] </td> </tr> </table>				<p>Responses that do not earn points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a single piece of evidence. • Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic of the prompt. • Provide evidence that is outside the time period or region specified in the prompt. • Repeat information that is specified in the prompt. <p>Examples that do not earn points:</p> <p>Provide evidence outside the time period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The religious conflict of the Reformation led many Protestants to be suspicious of artwork since they thought it could lead to idolatry and superstition.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify at least two specific historical examples relevant to approaches to the arts in the period 1750 to 1950. <p>Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art styles and movements before 1850 [Rococo, Baroque, Neo-Classicism, Romanticism] • Art styles and movements after 1850 [Academic painting, Impressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, Dadaism, Futurism, Existentialism] • Specific examples of artists and their works • Realism as social critique • Expressionism and attempts to portray subjective internal states of mind • Effects of World War I, “the lost generation” • The increase in depictions of non-European subjects as a result of colonial expansion • Mass media <p>Example of a statement that earns one point for evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Romantic artists and writers often set their works in the idyllic countryside to further their themes of emotion and beauty, while the later Realists favored the grit and grime of the cities and factories to push for social reform.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn 2 points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use at least two specific historical examples to support an argument regarding the most significant difference between approaches to the arts in the period 1750 to 1850 and 1850 to 1950. <p>Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Picasso’s Guernica is a good example of the changed approach to arts. 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<p>Additional Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, statements credited as evidence will be more specific than statements credited as contextualization. • If a response has a multipart argument, then it can meet the threshold of two pieces of evidence by giving one example for one part of the argument and another example for a different part of the argument, but the total number of examples must still be at least two. 						

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
<p>Row D Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Uses historical reasoning [e.g. comparison, causation, continuity and change] to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.</p>	<p>2 points Demonstrates a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt through sophisticated argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			

		evidence support a nuanced or complex argument that responds to the prompt]
Additional Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To earn the first point for analysis and reasoning, the response must use historical reasoning to structure a response to the prompt, although the reasoning might be uneven or imbalanced, or the evidence may be overly general or lacking in specificity.• This complex understanding must be part of the argument and may be demonstrated in any part of the response.• While it is not necessary for this complex understanding to be woven throughout the response, it must be more than merely a phrase or reference.		

Sample 3A 1 of 1

The era of Neo-Classicism, Renaissance art, and Baroque coming to a close by 1750 something new was brewing. This background led into the 1750-1850 period of art. One of delicate beauty, soft colors, and secular themes. Then as idealistic views inspired by the Enlightenment turned to cold realism in the 1800s with new writers emerging questioning everything. Artists were then faced with an even greater affront to the peace, the world wars. Artist tail spinned. They did not know how to understand to horrors facing them. They began to paint nonsensical paintings. This dramatic shift started in the Enlightenment but took hold during the wars. The first period stepped into realism while holding on to vestiges of its romantic past while the second period denied all reason and began to explore the new world with abstract representation.

The 1750-1850 was a time of change in Europe. The Industrial Revolution was beginning in England and making its way to the mainland. Politically times changed with the political pendulum swinging left slightly and then dramatically right after 1815. In the art world Romanticism held sway with its idealism of the world and heroes. Paintings of adventures high in the clouds were a staple. Paintings such as "Steel and Mist" depicted the new realities of the Industrial Revolution. They also would glorify violence with painting such as Napoleon depicted on his grand horse. Romanticism was a soft and idealized portrayal of the human. Though as later Enlightenment took hold the view of the world changed. Heliocentrism and questioning reality affected art. Artists painted what they saw plain and simple. This is articulated well in a painting called "The Stone Breakers." The image is of a working pair of men doing slow, hard work. They have not been glorified like a romantic artist might but they are real. For artist not in this new form portraying the working class was unlikely especially as the front and center. Though 1750-1850 included the romantic and realist movement two movements that believed themselves so different the visual style is quite similar with a continued focus on perspective with photo realistic style and humans and nature as the focus.

From 1850-1950 a new styles hit the art scene as conflict brewed and bubbled over. Surrealism was one of these movements. A turn away from reality is evident. The ideas of individuals such as Sigmund Freud was also an inspiration to crucial artists in this period such as Salvador Dali. He would paint nonsensical dream scapes. He wanted to portray the real in a way that is unreal. His paintings would make commentary on the passage of time and the new realities of life. Another art style that arose in popularity was Cubism, forefronted by paintings such as "Guernica." The forms are distorted and only vaguely recognizable. Painters moved as far as they could from the conventions of the past. Guernica is a depiction of the horrors of bombing on a town during the Spanish Civil War depicts simply shaped animals and people. The viewer has more room to imagine and feel the pain and suffering. Yet another movement of this time that was a direct reaction to WW1 was Dadaism, a style often dominated by collages. Artists came to believe that if the world made no sense then why should art. In the end these art styles leaned towards interpretation, hidden meanings, and striking bold lines.

The era of perfection, idealism, and eventually reality portrayed all through a camera like lens faded into a chaotic representation of reality with shape, collages, and unrealistic portrayals. This was spurred on by war and uncertainty about the universe. Art reflects life and from 1750-1850 the world was making progress in many ways, but 1850-1950 tensions in the Balkans led to a war that changed it all. Artists were struggling with the new reality after failed revolutions and later an extreme loss of life. They portrayed these lost feelings in their art leaving a large gap between it and its preceding art. The most significant difference between these two periods is realism, the former's emphasis and the latter's lack thereof.

Sample 3B 1 of 1

Following the Renaissance, which was a period of bringing back Greek and Latin language, it showed the ideas that were presented during this period was also showed in arts that were painted during the Renaissance. Arts often showed the changes in religion, ideas, and movements during the European history. As art changed its style various times with the changes made with revolutions and reformations in Europe, the difference between the arts from 1750 to 1850 and the arts from 1850 to 1950 are significant. The most important difference between approaches to the arts in the period of 1750 to 1850 and the arts in the period from 1850 to 1950 were ideas from the Enlightenment, the ideas from Romanticism, and the use of propagandas.

Enlightenment was a period of time where people started to think more logically and question the power. Thinkers like John Locke supported limited government and explained how the government is required to protect three aspects of human life: life, liberty, and property. Locke also explained how the people have the rights to overthrow the power once the government fails to protect the three aspects of life. A sense of secularism, idea of separating religious ideas from government, is also shown during this period with the Scientific Revolution which revealed the truth of the nature. Arts during Enlightenment shows the everyday life of common people instead of religious themes in the Medieval and Renaissance arts.

Romanticism was a reaction of the Enlightenment and Industrialization. Romanticism focused more on the beauty of the nature instead of people nor religion. Romanticism arts focused on the nature such as sunsets, mountains, and rivers instead of humans being the main theme of the art during the Enlightenment. During the period from 1850 to 1950, arts like cubism and dada are introduced additionally. For example, cubism was a type of art that was first used by Picasso and he used geometric squares to create art.

Ideas were not the only difference that was made in the approaches to the arts. World War one and two also impacted the approaches to arts by creating propagandas to join the army instead of arts that illustrated the beauty of nature or daily life of common people. The use of propagandas are also shown during the Cold War which was a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Each of the countries used propagandas to implement the hatred towards the enemy which resulted the tensions between two countries to rise even more.

The approaches to the arts were significantly different and change throughout the period. From enlightenment arts to propaganda that implemented hatred, the approaches of arts also shows the difference in the societies that changed throughout the period of time.

Sample 3C 1 of 1

Styles for art and the way they were demanded had significant changes over the years. Rulers, religious figures, and political beliefs have all had an influence over what art has been produced. From the time period 1750 to 1850 and the period from 1850 to 1950 are distinguished by their styles and topics of art.

During the time of 1750 to 1850 art primarily focused on monarchs that had paid for them or on religious figures. Religion had a heavy influence on the early years of European history, often leading to conflict because of differing religious beliefs, so there is no surprise with it being a repetitive trend in the glorification of religious figures in art during this period. Monarchs often patroned the arts and had many portraits made of themselves. Both of these topics were depicted very realistically. Art began to shift in the period from 1850 to 1950. The topics of art often depicted accounts from battles or topics that would shed light onto a country or a group of people. This is seen heavily in both World Wars with the institution of propaganda used by both the Allied and Axis powers. This style of art was often very over exaggerated in order to persuade an audience. Art became less about the beauty and more about the message perceived.

Long Essay 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

Thesis Score: 1

Contextualization Score: 1

Evidence Score: 2

Analysis and Reasoning Score: 2

Total Score: 6

A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for thesis by establishing the line of reasoning that the realism of the early period contrasted with the “abstract representation” of the later period.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for context in the first paragraph by explaining how artistic movements evolved from earlier Neo-Classical, Renaissance, and Baroque art.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

Providing Specific Examples of Evidence: 1

The response earned 1 point for evidence for identifying multiple works of art and artists (The Stone Breakers, Napoleon, Dali, Guernica) and artistic styles (Surrealism, Cubism, Dadaism) from each period.

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument: 1

The response earned 1 point for connecting these multiple pieces of evidence to the argument that differentiates approaches to the arts in each period.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 2

Using Historical Reasoning: 1

The response earned 1 point because the body paragraphs structure an argument around a comparison between the two time periods.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding: 1

The response earned 1 point for complex understanding by using at least four pieces of specific and relevant evidence to support an argument about the differences in approaches to art.

Long Essay Question 3 (continued)**Sample: 3B****Thesis Score: 0****Contextualization Score: 1****Evidence Score: 2****Analysis and Reasoning Score: 1****Total Score: 4****A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0**

The response did not earn the point for thesis as the listing of approaches to the arts (Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Propaganda) is not explicitly demonstrating differences between the time periods. The attempt in the final paragraph identifies differences in “societies” that changed rather than distinct differences in each era.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for context with detailed descriptions of the impact of Enlightenment thought on changing approaches to the arts as well as for discussing Cold War hostilities impacting approaches to the arts through propaganda.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2**Providing Specific Examples of Evidence: 1**

The response earned 1 point for evidence by referencing multiple approaches to the arts including Romanticism, Cubism, and Cold War era propaganda.

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument: 1

The response earned 1 point for supporting the argument by consistently establishing differences in approaches to the arts across the relevant time periods. This is done by contrasting Enlightenment art with Romanticism and again with shift to propaganda during the Cold War.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 1**Using Historical Reasoning: 1**

The response earned 1 point for historical reasoning by directly contrasting approaches to the arts between the time periods with the shift from the Enlightenment era focus on everyday life to Romanticism emphasizing nature, and World Wars/Cold War propaganda.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding: 0

The response did not earn the point for complexity as it does not demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt through sophisticated argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.

Long Essay Question 3 (continued)**Sample: 3C****Thesis Score: 0****Contextualization Score: 1****Evidence Score: 0****Analysis and Reasoning Score: 1****Total Score: 2****A. Thesis/Claim (0–1 points): 0**

The response did not earn the point for thesis as the statement concerning “political beliefs” is both vague and does not designate either time period.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for context in the second paragraph by discussing the influence of religion and monarchs as patrons to the arts.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 0**Providing Specific Examples of Evidence: 0**

The response did not earn the point for evidence as only one specific example, exaggerated propaganda during World War 2, is referenced.

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument: 0

The response did not earn the point for argument as not enough evidence was used for backing the claim.

D. Analysis and Reasoning (0–2 points): 1**Using Historical Reasoning: 1**

The response earned 1 point for a minimal effort at historical reasoning in the second paragraph by establishing that there was a “shift” in approaches to the arts between the two time periods.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding: 0

The response did not earn the point for complexity as it does not demonstrate a complex understanding of the historical development that is the focus of the prompt through sophisticated argumentation and/or effective use of evidence.