

2025



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# AP<sup>®</sup> European History

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

### **Inside:**

#### **Long Essay Question 2**

- Scoring Guidelines**
- Student Samples**
- Scoring Commentary**

## Question 2: Long Essay Question, Comparison of Colonization by the Atlantic Powers

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the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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 the colonization efforts of the Iberian powers [Spain and/or Portugal] and the colonization efforts of the Atlantic powers [Britain, France, and/or the Netherlands] in the period 1450 to 1700.

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row A</b> <b>Thesis/Claim</b>  <b>(0–1 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Responds to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis/claim that establishes a line of reasoning.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are not historically defensible.</li> <li>• Only restate or rephrase the prompt.</li> <li>• Do not respond to the prompt.</li> <li>• Do not establish a line of reasoning.</li> <li>• Are overgeneralized.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a historically defensible thesis or claim about the most significant difference between the colonization efforts of the Iberian powers [Spain and/or Portugal] and the colonization efforts of the Atlantic powers [Britain, France, and/or the Netherlands] in the period 1450 to 1700. The thesis or claim must either provide some indication of the reason for making that claim OR establish categories of the argument.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Provide a restatement of the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“There were many differences between the Atlantic powers who sought overseas colonies.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Provide a historically defensible claim, but do not establish a line of reasoning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The Spanish established the largest colonial empire.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Are not historically defensible</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The main difference between Spanish and Portuguese efforts and the efforts of other Atlantic powers was that England, France and the Netherlands turned a profit much more quickly.”</i></li> </ul>		<p><b>Examples that earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Unlike the other Atlantic powers, Spain’s empire dominated large parts of the interior of the Americas and was able to extract vast amounts of mineral wealth.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Establish a line of reasoning that evaluates the topic of the prompt with analytic categories</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Spain and Portugal were much more strongly motivated by the desire to spread Christianity, while the other Atlantic powers primarily sought to gain wealth and power.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Establish a line of reasoning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Spain and Portugal were able to establish colonial empires much earlier than the other Atlantic powers.”</i> [Minimally acceptable thesis/claim]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• The thesis or claim must identify a relevant development(s) in the period, although it is not required to encompass the entire period.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
<p><b>Row B</b> <b>Contextualization</b>  <b>(0–1 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.</p>		
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt.</li> <li>• Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt.</li> <li>• Provide a passing phrase or reference.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Do not provide context relevant to the topic of the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The Renaissance was changing European culture.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Passing phrase or reference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The period 1450 to 1700 is often called the Age of Exploration.”</i></li> </ul> </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately describe a context relevant to European colonization efforts in the period 1450 to 1700.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about new maritime and military technology</li> <li>• Voyages of exploration and conquest</li> <li>• The role of religion in overseas expansion</li> <li>• New monarchies and state centralization in early modern Europe</li> <li>• The development of joint-stock companies in France, Britain, and the Netherlands</li> <li>• Mercantilism</li> </ul> <p><b>Example of acceptable contextualization:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“In the early modern period, advances in shipbuilding technology, navigation, and weaponry gave European countries the unique means to project their power over long distances.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“European monarchs and merchants were interested in increasing their profits from long-distance trade with Asia.”</i> [Minimally acceptable contextualization]</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>			<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt.</li> <li>• Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt.</li> <li>• Provide a passing phrase or reference.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Do not provide context relevant to the topic of the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The Renaissance was changing European culture.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Passing phrase or reference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The period 1450 to 1700 is often called the Age of Exploration.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately describe a context relevant to European colonization efforts in the period 1450 to 1700.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about new maritime and military technology</li> <li>• Voyages of exploration and conquest</li> <li>• The role of religion in overseas expansion</li> <li>• New monarchies and state centralization in early modern Europe</li> <li>• The development of joint-stock companies in France, Britain, and the Netherlands</li> <li>• Mercantilism</li> </ul> <p><b>Example of acceptable contextualization:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“In the early modern period, advances in shipbuilding technology, navigation, and weaponry gave European countries the unique means to project their power over long distances.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“European monarchs and merchants were interested in increasing their profits from long-distance trade with Asia.”</i> [Minimally acceptable contextualization]</li> </ul>
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide an overgeneralized statement about the time period referenced in the prompt.</li> <li>• Provide context that is not relevant to the prompt.</li> <li>• Provide a passing phrase or reference.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Do not provide context relevant to the topic of the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The Renaissance was changing European culture.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Passing phrase or reference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“The period 1450 to 1700 is often called the Age of Exploration.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurately describe a context relevant to European colonization efforts in the period 1450 to 1700.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about new maritime and military technology</li> <li>• Voyages of exploration and conquest</li> <li>• The role of religion in overseas expansion</li> <li>• New monarchies and state centralization in early modern Europe</li> <li>• The development of joint-stock companies in France, Britain, and the Netherlands</li> <li>• Mercantilism</li> </ul> <p><b>Example of acceptable contextualization:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“In the early modern period, advances in shipbuilding technology, navigation, and weaponry gave European countries the unique means to project their power over long distances.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“European monarchs and merchants were interested in increasing their profits from long-distance trade with Asia.”</i> [Minimally acceptable contextualization]</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• To earn this point, the context provided must be more than a phrase or reference.</li> </ul>				

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
<p><b>Row C Evidence</b> <b>(0–2 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Provides specific examples of at least <b>two</b> pieces of evidence relevant to the <b>topic</b> of the prompt.</p>	<p><b>2 points</b> Supports an <b>argument</b> in response to the prompt using at least <b>two</b> pieces of specific and relevant evidence.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>			
<p><b>Responses that do not earn points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify a single piece of evidence.</li> <li>Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic of the prompt.</li> <li>Provide evidence that is outside the time period or region specified in the prompt.</li> <li>Repeat information that is specified in the prompt.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples that do not earn points:</b></p> <p><b>Provide evidence outside the time period</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“The British established full control over India after the Sepoy uprising.”</i></li> <li><i>“The Atlantic Powers divided Africa during the Congress of Berlin.”</i></li> <li><i>“Britain diminished French colonial power during the Seven Years’ War.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn 1 point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify at least two specific historical examples relevant to European colonization efforts in the period 1450 to 1700.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about particular colonial holdings [e.g., New Spain, Brazil, New France, New England, Dutch East Indies, Caribbean plantation colonies]</li> <li>The Columbian Exchange</li> <li>Slavery and the transatlantic trade in enslaved persons</li> <li>Details of particular explorers [e.g., De Gama, Columbus, Cabot, etc.]</li> <li>Missionary efforts [e.g., the Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, Protestants]</li> <li>Commodities available from various overseas locations [e.g., spices from the East Indies, furs from North America]</li> <li>Colonial conflicts [e.g., disputes of Spain and Portugal over newly discovered territories, English attacks on Spanish Caribbean colonies, the Dutch conquest of Brazil]</li> <li>Puritan [and other religious dissenters’] colonization of North America to escape persecution</li> </ul> <p><b>Example of a statement that earns one point for evidence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“The Dutch were motivated by economic gain when they took over Portuguese trading posts in Ceylon and the East Indies. These posts gave them access to markets in China and India where they could secure luxury goods.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn 2 points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use at least two specific historical examples to support an argument regarding the most significant difference between the colonization efforts of the Iberian powers [Spain and/or Portugal] and the colonization efforts of the Atlantic powers [Britain, France, and the Netherlands] in the period 1450 to 1700.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“The Spanish monarchy encouraged and supported the creation of mission stations to convert Native Americans, demonstrating how important religion was for Catholic powers as a motivating factor.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about the role of religion in Spanish colonization]</li> <li><i>“Although France employed Jesuit missionaries in North America, the main French efforts were directed towards increasing profits from the fur trade with Native Americans.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about the role of financial motivation for colonization efforts of France]</li> <li><i>“While Spanish and Portuguese spread Catholic beliefs across their colonial territories, British colonists were often religious dissenters who hoped to escape religious persecution.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about different aspects of religious motivation for the colonization efforts of Atlantic powers]</li> </ul>	

**Additional Notes:**

- 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><b>Row D</b> <b>Analysis and Reasoning</b>  <b>(0–2 points)</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b> Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Uses historical reasoning [e.g., comparison, causation, continuity, and change] to frame or structure an argument that addresses the prompt.</p>	<p><b>2 points</b> 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>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>			
<p><b>Responses that do not earn points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to an argument.</li> <li>May assert the use of historical reasoning but does not use it to frame or structure an argument.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn 1 point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument about the most significant difference between the colonization efforts of the Iberian powers [Spain and/or Portugal] and the colonization efforts of the Atlantic powers [Britain, France, and/or the Netherlands] in the period 1450 to 1700. The reasoning might be uneven or imbalanced, or the evidence may be overly general or lacking specificity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn 2 points:</b></p> <p>May demonstrate a complex understanding through sophisticated argumentation that is relevant to the prompt. This may be done in a variety of ways, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explaining multiple themes or perspectives to explore complexity or nuance; OR</li> <li>Explaining multiple causes or effects, multiple similarities or differences, or multiple continuities or changes; OR</li> <li>Explaining both cause and effect, both similarity and difference, or both continuity and change; OR</li> <li>Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across periods or geographical areas. These connections should clearly relate to an argument that responds to the prompt.</li> </ul> <p>May demonstrate a complex understanding through effective use of evidence relevant to an argument that addresses the prompt. This may be done in a variety of ways that might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explaining how multiple pieces of specific and relevant evidence [at least <b>four</b>] support a nuanced or complex argument that responds to the prompt; OR</li> <li>Using evidence effectively to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of different perspectives relevant to the prompt.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Examples that do not earn points:</b></p> <p><b>May include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to an argument.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Vasco de Gama was the first European to directly reach India by sea.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Using a historical reasoning process to frame or structure an argument could include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explaining patterns of European colonization using continuity and change to point out how the Spanish domination of the Americas was later challenged.</li> <li>Discussing European colonization using comparison and causation to describe how motivations differed among different European powers.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Demonstrating a complex understanding might include any of the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explaining contrasts between different types of motivation for colonization [e.g., religious or economic]. [Explains multiple themes or perspectives]</li> <li>Considering multiple differences, such as geography, motivation, economic effects, relations with colonized peoples and/or local powers, etc., before arguing one as the most significant. [Explains multiple similarities or differences]</li> <li>Comparing at least four specific colonies, such as New Spain, Brazil, New France, New England, to explore difference between the colonization efforts of the Atlantic powers. [Explains how at least four pieces of evidence support a nuanced or complex argument]</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Example of acceptable use of historical reasoning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>“Spain was able to create a vast colonial empire in the Americas, while Dutch and French colonial holdings in the Americas were much more modest.”</i> [Indicates a difference between the geographic scope of the colonial empires of Spain and Portugal and the Atlantic powers]</li></ul>	
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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.</li><li>• This complex understanding must be part of the argument and may be demonstrated in any part of the response.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>		

## **Sample 2A:**

Colonization increased dramatically from 1450 to 1700. With prime access to the Atlantic, Spain and Portugal had an early start in this process. They were early implementors of new naval technologies, such as lateen sails, the compass, and the astrolabe. Britain and the Netherlands began colonizing later, but also used new naval technology and quickly gained significant power in the global economy. All four nations continued colonizing for centuries, and benefitted from the Columbian Exchange and food, animals, and other resources increased their populations and boosted their economies. However, their colonies did have significant differences. The most significant difference between the colonization efforts of Spain and Portugal as compared to Britain and the Netherlands was the method of colonization and governance enforced on their colonies during that period.

These differences in colonization were present from the outset. Where Portugal and Spain had monarchy-sponsored colonization, Britain and the Netherlands colonized through independent companies. Christopher Columbus was sponsored directly by the Spanish monarchs to sail across the Atlantic, where he found the Americas instead of his intended destination in Asia. As Spanish and Portuguese explorers then began asserting their influence in the Americas, particularly Central and South America, they continued to receive support (and directives) from their monarchs. This set the stage for a direct control of the colonies by their imperial monarch. Conversely, the colonies of Britain and the Netherlands were formed by joint-stock companies. The British and Dutch joint-stock companies colonized land in North America funding from private investors, rather than the crown. This resulted in somewhat more independent societies than the colonies of Spain and Portugal. With this colonization came two distinct forms of governance. In Spanish and Portuguese colonies, control came directly from the monarchs. To this end, they established viceroys and spies monitor the governance of the colonies. The effect of this direct control in colonies was that they developed very similar societies to their European controllers; both nations had colonies with rigid social structures and absolutist rulers. The colonies of Britain and the Netherlands were more independent through salutary neglect. Their imperial controllers didn't control the colonies' economies or societies as much, as long as the colonies still profitted the imperial nations. This led to increased self-governance.

While their developments did differ in many ways, the governance of colonies of both Iberian and Atlantic powers limited the rights of natives. Colonizers from all four European nations believed themselves superior to and more civilized than the natives. However, even in this governance, the Iberian and Atlantic methods differed. The British and Dutch colonies were governed in such a way as to push out natives and take control of their land, whereas in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, many natives were forced work on plantations and convert to Catholicism.

## Sample 2B:

the most significant difference between major Iberian and the Atlantic powers was amount of land they took and exploited. In 1492 Columbus would be the first European to discover the Americas, which led to new rush for land and resources on the continent. Many resources taken back to Europe like gold, tobacco and sugar. But as this process continued colonization took place and towards end of colonization in the Americas many of these nations declared independence. So, the main difference between the Iberian powers and the Atlantic powers was the level of they would conquer and exploit.

At first most of the land colonized was down in South America, which was because Spain had discovered the land first. Plus Spain would send many explorers to the area early on getting a better understanding like Balboa who crossed modern day Panama find the Pacific Ocean, or Magellan who found a way to around South America now called the Strait of Magellan. At the time Atlantic powers were doing some exploration but not the same level and Atlantic powers didn't even make it to the Americas until the 1500's. So with Iberian powers able to gain an early start on the land grab in the Americas.

A major aspect of this difference was how the sides went about exploiting the land for resources. The Spanish were able to set up colonies all across the continent, which they built mines and use slave labor to mine for resources, like most famously gold, which would later on crash the Spanish economy so because they mined so much gold. This is different the English and the Dutch who would trade either grow or trade cash crops, like tobacco in modern Virginia, or the Dutch trading for valuable goods like spices.

The heart of the difference was how much land the powers took and the Ocean powers took all of the land in South America and Central America, except Spanish North America. But the Atlantic power colonized North America in good chunks like French Louisiana and Quebec and British thirteen colonies and what would later become Canada. Even the Dutch took some land for trading in modern day New York City. So again the major difference was the area of land they took in the Americas.

The era of colonization of North America mimics the simple tale of the colonization of Africa. Both events so treaties divide up the continents like the Treaty of Tordesillas where the Pope gave all of Brazil to the Portuguese and all of North America to the Spanish, which is similar to the Berlin Conference which divided up Africa among the European powers. So both events reflect each other in different ways.

## Sample 2C:

The Age of exploration set up the early empire and its vast trade routes that the powers gained in the past century. Spain had its dominance in the sea route giving prominent figure like Hernan Cortez and other figures from other countries like Christopher Columbus. Portugal had a say in this because they both were Big Monarchies. Britain with its dominance of industrial ways with France being behind.

This begins with the spice trade route which was with India and Asia which the Spanish and Portugal had a say in this. The point to when they sent Christopher Columbus west because they would have to go through the Ottomans which they elevated their taxes on the goods. The people had no idea that two other continents were there and he sailed in the Atlantic which he landed in the Caribbean. He thought that he landed somewhere in Asia and soon the Nations learned that there were more opportunities there with unconquered land. The Nations sent conquistadores there which they had little people but they brought their disease with them mainly smallpox which wiped 90% of the populations of the native that lived there. They called it the New World because their resources they used were mainly being depleted and it was a Old World. This initiated the Columbian Exchange which many vegetables were exchanged such as beans, squash, cocoa and livestock were brought there by settlers such as pigs, cows and other animals.

The Treaty of Tordesillas was with Spain would get the west of the New World and Portugal would get the east which calmed the two superpowers down. The whole thing was for settlers and with knowledge of Gold and Silver they wouldn't let that go. They saw the opportunity to get rich and with that there was a particular mountain they adored and would send postcards about that mountain. The reason for that mountain was that there was a lot of silver from it which flowed through Spain and that led to an economy boost so the prices raised up and people who didn't have the money would just see exponential prices rise up and have no way to pay their food supplies. The people would also have slaves that worked for them in the colonies but used the native people for that. The problem was that they knew the land too much so the Nations would buy African Slaves and would send them off over there and they came back for more and they learned that the more people that would fit in the bottom of the boat the more profit they earned. The Slaves would endure living hell because of limited space and no bathrooms to go to which their route was called the Middle Passage. Their new homes wouldn't get any better.

The 7 Year War was involved with Britain, France, other parts of the world because it was to dominate the trade options and Britain was leading the charge. This whole problem led to Britain have a battle which was called the French Indian War with the French helping the Native Americans because they were better than the British in their eyes. The Native Americans would have a win against them and this led to the British have an agricultural revolution. The people would have an economy boost and would have owned some of the land in the Americas. The people would have this.

The conclusion was with the century and economic boost from the colonialism

## Long Essay Question 2

**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: 2A**

**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 offering a claim in the first paragraph about the fact that Spanish and Portuguese imperialism began earlier than that of the other Atlantic powers. The last paragraph of the response contains an alternative thesis about how Iberian powers governed by forcing natives to work on their plantations and to convert to Catholicism, while Atlantic powers forced natives off of their land. Either of these would have been sufficient to earn the point.

### B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization by discussing early implementations of naval technologies, as well as the Columbian Exchange in the first paragraph of the essay.

### C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

#### Providing Specific Examples of Evidence

The response earned 1 point for providing specific examples of evidence because it provides at least two specific and relevant pieces of evidence (Spanish crown sponsorship of exploration and British and Dutch joint-stock Companies, and the Spanish use of imperial viceroys and spies to solidify their control) throughout the essay.

#### Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response earned 1 point for supporting an argument by using multiple pieces of relevant evidence regarding governance and control over the colonies throughout the essay. The essay uses evidence about the royal sponsorship of Columbus and the use of joint-stock companies in Britain and the Netherlands to support an argument about the different financial support in the Iberian and Atlantic colonies. The evidence on the use of viceroys and spies in the Iberian colonies supports an argument about the distinct forms of governance in different colonial systems.

## Long Essay Question 2 (continued)

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

#### Using Historical Reasoning

The response earned 1 point for using historical reasoning by comparing the Iberian and Atlantic power in regard to limiting the rights of natives, and by contrasting the direct form of control of the Iberian colonies with that of the increased self governance of the British and Dutch settlements.

#### Demonstrating Complex Understanding

The response earned 1 point for demonstrating complex understanding as the response brings multiple historical perspectives about governance to bear. The third paragraph discusses how financial interests for the crown and its state sponsorship of Iberian exploration would lead to direct imperial control of the colonies, whereas privately funded joint-stock companies allowed for more independence in Atlantic colonies. The fourth paragraph uses additional specific evidence to discuss how once colonies were established, these differences continued, as Iberian colonies were directly and more autocratically administered while Atlantic colonies had a greater degree of self-governance so long as they remained profitable.

#### Sample: 2B

**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 does not earn a point for thesis as the claim to the different amount of land Iberian and Atlantic powers took and exploited does not establish a line of reasoning.

### B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earns 1 point for contextualization because by discussing the explorations of de Balboa and Magellan and the early start of the Iberian powers in colonizing the Americas.

### C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

#### Providing Specific Examples of Evidence

The response earned 1 point for providing specific examples of evidence because it provides at least two specific and relevant pieces of evidence (Spanish mines, use of slave labor, Dutch and British cash crops) throughout the essay.

#### Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response earned 1 point for supporting an argument by using multiple pieces of relevant evidence. The essay uses Spain's exploitation of land resources (like Spain's mining of gold and the subsequent economic crash), and British cultivation of tobacco in Virginia to support an argument about the different methods of exploitation employed by Britain and Spain.

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

The response earns 1 point for using historical reasoning because the essay contrasts the Iberian and Atlantic powers' economic strategies.

**Demonstrating Complex Understanding**

The response did not earn a point for demonstrating complex understanding. The response's attempt to compare the Treaty of Tordesillas with the Treaty of Berlin is not sufficiently developed to demonstrate complex understanding. The response also attempts to provide multiple perspectives with a paragraph that contrasts the Iberian and Atlantic Powers based on the "area of land they took in the Americas." However, this is too vague to achieve the point.

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

The response does not earn a point for thesis as there is no discernible claim or line of reasoning in answer to the prompt.

**B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1**

The response earns 1 point for contextualization because by discussing Columbus' efforts to find a sea route to the East in response to increasing Ottoman taxation on goods.

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

The response earned 1 point for providing at least two pieces of evidence relevant to the prompt (conquistadores, smallpox, Columbian exchange, Treaty of Tordesillas, slavery) throughout the essay.

**Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument**

The response earned 1 point for supporting an argument by using multiple pieces of relevant evidence regarding the Spanish and Portuguese accumulation of wealth at the cost of the demise of the native population and with the use of slavery (the discussion of British dominance cannot be credited as it falls outside the time period of the prompt.)

## Long Essay Question 2 (continued)

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

#### Using Historical Reasoning

The response does not earn a point for using historical reasoning because it does not attempt to compare or contrast the Iberian and Atlantic motivations. The discussion of British dominance over France cannot be credited as it falls outside the time period of the prompt.

#### Demonstrating Complex Understanding

The response did not earn a point for demonstrating complex understanding because there is no explicit attempt within the response.