

2025



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

Inside:

Long Essay Question 4

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

Question 4: Long Essay Question, Changes in the Status of Women

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the timed nature of the exam, essays may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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 status of women in the period 1815 to 1914 and the status of women in the period after 1914.

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 the status of women in the period 1815 to 1914 and the status of women in the period after 1914. 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>“Women went through numerous significant changes of status in the 1800s and 1900s.”</i> <p>Provide a historically defensible claim, but do not establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The most important change for women was gaining more political power.”</i> <p>Are not historically defensible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Women gained more rights in the 1800s than they would later.”</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>“Although women gained the right to vote in the 1900s, the greater and more important difference between their status in the 1900s and the earlier period was they gained greater economic opportunities after 1914.”</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>“While early feminists focused on the status of women in terms of their right to vote and women’s participation in politics, the later feminist movement was more concerned with the issues of reproductive rights and equal social opportunities.”</i> <p>Establish a line of reasoning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“World War I significantly changed the professional status of women in comparison to the earlier period because it gave them access to new jobs.”</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	
Row B Contextualization	0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.	1 point Describes a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
(0–1 points)	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	<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>“In Christianity, women were not allowed to serve as priests.”</i> <p>Provide a passing phrase or reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Women lacked most rights prior to the twentieth century.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn this point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately describe a context relevant to the status of European women in the 1800s and/or 1900s. <p>Examples of relevant context that earn this point include the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women’s involvement in the French Revolution • The Enlightenment • Voices against women’s rights, including Rousseau • The cult of domesticity and nuclear family • Growth of educational institutions for women • Ideas of popular sovereignty and national identity • Early feminist writings [e.g., Mary Wollstonecraft, Olympe de Gouges] • Industrialization and changes in women’s employment in the 1800s • Liberal and conservative arguments against women’s role in the public sphere • Socialist debates about women’s labor and political rights <p>Example of acceptable contextualization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Predated by many individual female thinkers advocating for the equal potential of women, the early feminist movement arose as one of the responses to industrialization and socialist politics.”</i> • <i>“The Enlightenment’s values of civic rights helped develop ideas of female suffrage.”</i> [Minimally acceptable contextualization]
	<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		
<p>Row C Evidence (0–2 points)</p>	<p>0 points Does not meet the criteria for one point.</p>	<p>1 point Provides specific examples of at least two pieces of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt.</p>	<p>2 points Supports an argument in response to the prompt using at least two pieces of specific and relevant evidence.</p>
Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
<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>Evidence outside the time period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Women actively participated in the Renaissance and Reformation.”</i> 	<p>Responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify at least two specific historical examples relevant to the status of European women in the 1800s and/or 1900s. <p>Examples of evidence that are specific and relevant include the following (two examples required):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cult of Domesticity Female participation in the World Wars Birth control and reproductive rights Women’s suffrage movements in Britain and elsewhere Details regarding nineteenth and early twentieth century feminists [e.g., Flora Tristan, Emmeline Pankhurst] Details regarding postwar feminists [e.g., Simone de Beauvoir] Industrialization and the increased demand for female labor The effects of war mobilization on women’s labor and social status during and after the First World War Rise of companionate marriage and more stress on emotional bonds between married couples Soviet attempts to foster gender equality Marxism and socialism and the Marxist critique of the bourgeois family <p>Example of a statement that earns one point for evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“After the Bolshevik Revolution, the Soviet government used state resources to try to boost female equality, setting up daycare facilities and opening many professions to women, though women were largely shut out of high government positions.”</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 the status of women in the period 1815 to 1914 and the status of women in the period after 1914. <p>Examples that successfully support an argument with evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“The spread of reliable birth control in the 1900s had a major effect on women’s status, allowing them to choose when to have children.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about the greater changes in women’s status in the later period] <i>“In the 1800s and early 1900s, women in several countries gained rights to own property and manage their own legal affairs, although they still had lower status than men in many ways.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about changes in women’s status in the earlier period] <i>“Women gained the right to vote in several Western European countries after the First World War in recognition of their contributions to the war effort.”</i> [Uses evidence to support an argument about changes in women’s rights after 1914] 	

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>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			
	<p>Responses that do not earn points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to an argument. May assert the use of historical reasoning but does not use it to frame or structure an argument. 	<p>Responses that earn 1 point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must demonstrate the use of historical reasoning to frame or structure an argument about the most significant difference between the status of women in the period 1815 to 1914 and the status of women in the period after 1914. The reasoning might be uneven or imbalanced, or the evidence may be overly general or lacking specificity. 	<p>Responses that earn 2 points:</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"> Explaining multiple themes or perspectives to explore complexity or nuance; OR Explaining multiple causes or effects, multiple similarities or differences, or multiple continuities or changes; OR Explaining both cause and effect, both similarity and difference, or both continuity and change; OR 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. <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"> Explaining how multiple pieces of specific and relevant evidence [at least four] support a nuanced or complex argument that responds to the prompt; OR Using evidence effectively to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of different perspectives relevant to the prompt.
	<p>Examples that do not earn points:</p> <p>Asserts reasoning without framing or structuring an argument</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>“Many aspects of women’s status changed from the 1800s to the 1900s, but some important ones stayed the same.”</i> 	<p>Using a historical reasoning process to frame or structure an argument could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussing differences in women’s status in the two periods, such as voting rights, marriage and divorce, labor and education in two periods using comparison. Discussing causes for changes in women’s status over the two periods using causation (e.g., explaining how World War I affected women in the workforce). 	<p>Demonstrating a complex understanding might include any of the following, if appropriate elaboration is provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering multiple differences in women’s status between the two periods before arguing for one as the most significant, e.g., arguing that women’s gain of political/voting rights in the twentieth century across Europe was the most significant change. [Explaining multiple similarities or differences] Elaborating differences in women’s status in different regions of Europe [e.g., Eastern vs. Western Europe or Northern vs. Mediterranean Europe] and how they affected changes in status from one period to the next. [Explaining relevant and insightful connections within and across geographical areas]

	<p>Example of acceptable use of historical reasoning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The legal and political status of women changed more quickly than their social and economic status.”</i> [Indicates a difference between two categories] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing in some detail the contributions of at least four significant figures or events in the feminist movement that affected the status of women in the two periods. [Explaining how multiple pieces of specific and relevant evidence, at least four, support a nuanced or complex argument]
<p>Additional Notes:</p> <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 4A:

Prior to the nineteenth century was the Enlightenment, which emphasized ideas of individualism and rational thinking. Individualism was the idea that one's own opinion and individual thought mattered and the idea to critically think and explore different ways the world can operate was emphasized through rational thinking. These new ideas among men allowed for emphasis on one's own opinion and many enlightened philosophes discussed their ideas in coffeehouses to spread those ideas. As well as this, in 1789, the French Revolution began, emphasizing nationalism. This nationalism was spread across Europe in the Napoleonic Wars, led by Napoleon, who spread these ideas throughout Europe, which sparked many other revolutions across the country like the Revolutions of 1830, allowing for many people to fight for their rights and opinions in their countries, which sparked such thoughts amongst the women of those countries. To a lesser extent, the most significant difference between the status of women in 1815-1914 and women's status after 1914 was their ability to choose their means of reproduction and increased consent in marriage because they could now divorce their husbands and choose when to have children, however, to a greater extent, the most significant difference of the status of women was that women had the rights to work after 1914 because of their increased involvement in factories and on farms during wartime.

In the period 1815-1914, women started to think more strongly about their place in society because of new ideas like individualism and nationalism, which emphasized individual thoughts and opinions and rights. This led women to start thinking about their voice in the governments and fight for women's suffrage. Because of this, women's suffrage groups emerged known as the suffragists and the suffragettes. The suffragists were a group of women who did peaceful revolts and movements for the rights to women's suffrage and the suffragettes were a group of people who did radical revolts, hunger strikes and violent actions like throwing rocks at the prime minister's windows. This was successful in many parts, but still took a very long time to give women the right to vote in many countries, for example, in France, women's right to vote was established only in 1945. However, after 1914, women were more concerned with the right to work in factories and on farms as a result of the world wars. Because of the need for all men to be in military, women filled in the jobs as factory workers and farmers to grow food to support the men in the military. However, once the war was over, women were expected to go back to being a perfect wife for their husbands and only raise the children. This led to many women revolting and calling out governments to give them their rights to work in factories and on farms because of their efforts during the war, and led many women to fight harder for their rights in government. This was successful in many countries and women like Margaret Thatcher even landed jobs in higher positions like being the first female prime minister (of Britain). This granted women a higher societal status because they had the right to work and were equal in terms of jobs with men, however the fight for women's rights in jobs continued past this point because women were still not equally paid for the same amount of effort, but this sparked change for women's status and also was one of the main starting points for women's right to work.

To the lesser extent, a difference between women's status 1815-1914 and post-1914 was that post-1914, there was new technology built for women and new laws passed for

women. Of this new technology was the Birth Control Pill, which garnered mixed responses, from the Catholic Church, but was overall successful with women. This pill gave women more privacy and choice over their bodies and means for reproduction because they could regulate whether or not to get pregnant with the pill. This results in later births, but also more women that had choice over when to have children. As well as new technology, women were also allowed the right to divorce. Before this time, women had no choice on whether or not they could divorce their husbands, and divorce was in the hands of the man alone. However, laws for divorce were passed so that women also had the choice on whether or not to divorce their husbands and allowed consensual marriages among women and men in society. This also granted women higher place in society because they had more choice regarding their rights to privacy, reproduction, and marriage.

Therefore, the most significant differences among women's status in 1815-1914 and after 1914 was the increased right to vote to right to work, and choice on privacy, marriage, and reproductive rights.

Sample 4B:

The most significant difference between the status of women in the period of 1815 to 1914 and the status of women in the period after 1914 was the view of domesticity.

The period of 1815 to 1914 was a time of significant change of social structures. The middle class had substantially grown, and along with its growth was development of a middle class lifestyle. Working hours became less and less, people had more free times, population was growing, and entertainment had become huge. Ideas of a typical middle class family emerged, the nuclear family, and they supported the cult of domesticity, which is an idea that women should appear "idle" at all times. Women shouldn't work, and they should not have to worry about housework or childcare. This was supported by rise of consumerism. In France, the department store began targeting middle class women as their main demographic. Lowering prices to make products accessible, and marketing towards them. Overall, further ideas contributed to a view that women shouldn't work or engage in politics since it was not "feminine", rather they were best equipped to be mothers and wives. However this view dramatically shifted in the period after 1914. World War 1, was fully underway and all the men had been drafted to fight in the trenches. This led to women needing to take over the workforce to overcompensate for the lack of labor. Views shifted to women needing to support the soldiers and war efforts, leading to them making up majority of the industrial workforce. On top of that many women were directly involved in the war, taking on roles such as spies and nurses. By the end of the war, ideas had been completely changed and movements for equality and suffrage were everywhere. World War 1 was the starting point, and as time continued the status of women continued to change.

Sample 4C:

Women have a long past of being considered nothing but a machine to birth, and to marry. As history moved along, women were often forgotten or left to take care of the house, with no say in their rights or government. Queen Elizabeth I who was a politiqu-- or a political figure who valued people over power-- was an early figure of womens empowerment as her people followed her, despite her gender. This scenario as well as others pre-1914 built up first wave feminist ideals and eventually led women to their right to vote because many believed women had proved themselves worthy. Post 1914 ideals focused on having equal rights to men as the first wave built the foundation. The most significant difference between the status of women in the period of first wave feminism versus the second is their standing in society because of their newfound suffrage and ability to work the same job as a man.

Womens suffrage was important in the overall feminist movement because men began to realize that women were equal, and if not that, they were at least intelligent enough to vote. Societal differences are heavily noticed if reproductive rights are compared between the two periods. In the beginning, women's right to their own body was nearly nonexistent, but in post 1914, society's views have shifted and advancements like birth control have even been invented. This is important to women because it changes the long time ideals of the cult of domesticity and places women in an independent light, therefore impacting other aspects of the feminist movement. Marriage laws have greatly changed aswell because a women became more than her husband. Through hard work and protests in the feminist movement, a large step has been taken from the first wave to second wave, and while women are still fighting for the same rights as men, they now have a place in society other than a housewife which was the case as described by men in history.

The most significant difference between the status of women in 1815-1914 versus 1914-present is a womens place in society as it changed greatly between the two periods because of womens suffrage and new employment oppurtunities.

Long Essay Question 4

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: 4A

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. The introductory paragraph ends with a two-pronged thesis, explaining a line of reasoning concerning how liberalized divorce laws improved reproductive freedom, while WWI brought greater freedom to work.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization in the opening paragraph through a discussion of ideologies of individualism, rationalism, and nationalism developed during the Enlightenment.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

Providing Specific Examples of Evidence

The response earned 1 point for providing specific examples of evidence throughout the body of the essay, including a nuanced discussion of the suffrage movement, total war effort, increased political participation in the late 20th century exemplified by Margaret Thatcher, as well as supporting the secondary argument with details of 19th century social and religious attitudes toward reproduction, contrasted with postwar medical advances and legal developments.

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response earned 1 point for using specific pieces of evidence to support an argument in response to the prompt. Both the details about career changes, as well as reproduction are clearly linked to arguments about social advances for women. The information about suffrage prior to 1914 is connected to an argument about the emergence of a political movement for women's rights that was transformed in the context of war.

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

Using Historical Reasoning

The response earned 1 point for using historical reasoning to structure an argument about how mobilization for total war caused ongoing effects for women's status in workplaces.

Long Essay Question 4 (continued)

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

The response earned 1 point for demonstrating a complex understanding. The response lays out multiple causes and effects, analyzing both how WWI transformed economies and careers for women, as well as how changing family structures, both in reproductive medicine and law, provided women with greater opportunities.

Sample: 4B

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 thesis point because the opening line fails to establish a line of reasoning for the change in views of domesticity.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earned 1 point for contextualization for the information about the growth of the middle class in the nineteenth century at the start of the second paragraph.

C. Evidence (0–2 points): 2

Providing Specific Examples of Evidence

The response earned 1 point for use of specific evidence with its discussion of bourgeois domestic ideals and the growth of consumerism, followed by greater workforce participation in new fields during WWI.

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response earned 1 point for using the evidence it provides to support an argument by connecting the shift from domestic to public work to participation in WWI war efforts.

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

Using Historical Reasoning

The response earned 1 point for its use of historical reasoning by offering an explanation that WWI was the cause for women working in increasing numbers outside the home.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

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

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

The response earned 1 point for thesis. The sentences at the end of the first paragraph describing the goals of first- and second-wave feminists and crediting the suffrage movement and “ability to work the same job as a man” as the cause of change establishes a line of reasoning to earn the point.

B. Contextualization (0–1 points): 1

The response earns 1 point for contextualization for the description of premodern gender roles, with Elizabeth I serving as a model for successful political roles for women.

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

The response did not earn the point for providing specific examples of evidence. The discussion of domestic ideals would count as a valid piece of evidence, though the other points about reproductive rights and marriage laws mentioned are too vague to qualify and earn the point.

Using Specific Evidence in Support of a Relevant Argument

The response did not earn the point for providing specific examples of evidence, as it did not provide sufficient evidence.

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

The response earned 1 point for using historical reasoning to structure a causal argument about WWI providing the opportunity to demonstrate women’s importance and capabilities.

Demonstrating Complex Understanding

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