

2024



AP[®] European History

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 2

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Short-Answer Question 4

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Question 4: Short Answer No Stimulus**3 points****General Scoring Notes**

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timed nature of the exam, responses may contain errors that do not detract from their overall quality, as long as the historical content used to advance the argument is accurate.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

[a] Describe one major characteristic of the First World War. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- The war resulted in immense losses and disruptions for all involved states.
- New technologies such as machine guns, poison gas, and airplanes upset traditional military tactics and strategies.
- The war led to trench warfare and heavy losses of men.
- The war became globalized as European powers attacked each other's colonies and used colonial resources and manpower to support the war effort.
- The war led to total mobilization of people and resources, a total war that involved all of the population, including colonies.
- Increased government mobilization of the economy led to the end of laissez-faire governments.
- The government took unprecedented control of media and used propaganda to support the war effort.

[b] Explain one major cause of the First World War. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- Nationalism was closely linked to increased militarism and created high tensions in Europe, which eventually led to World War I.
- European powers had undertaken a major expansion of their militaries and were involved in a major arms race before the war.
- The assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir to the throne led to a diplomatic crisis among the major powers in Europe.
- Imperial competition for colonies and resources caused rivalry and hostility between major European powers in the decades leading to the conflict.
- Due to the alliance system, all major European powers were brought into a Balkan conflict between Serbia and Austria-Hungary.
- Germany sought to gain more land and economic resources in Europe.
- Leaders of states that faced internal divisions saw war as a means to provide unity.

- [c]** Explain one way in which the First World War contributed to changes in European politics in the interwar period [1919 to 1939]. **1 point**

Examples that earn this point include the following:

- The effects of the war led to protest and insurrection in the participating nations and eventually to revolutions that changed the international balance of power.
- World War I debt and disrupted trade contributed to the weakening of European economies.
- France and Britain received former German and Ottoman possessions in the Middle East through the mandate system, changing the imperial balance of power.
- The Versailles settlement, which imposed reparations on Germany, prevented the Weimar Republic from establishing a stable political and economic system.
- The harsh terms of the Versailles settlement led some nations to reject liberalism and slip into more authoritarian rule such as fascism during the 1930s.
- Perceptions of women’s roles during and after the war effort changed and led to greater political participation including voting rights in some nations.
- Aversion to the devastation of the war motivated efforts to avoid future conflict at all costs through the League of Nations, appeasement, and pacifism.

Total for question 4 3 points

Sample A

Sample 4A:

A) One major characteristic of the First World War was new technological innovations that were used during the war. The new technologies used during the war not only resulted in a death toll that was substantially larger than any other war that had occurred in history, but it also facilitated the physical and mental devastation that many troops suffered from after the war (PTSD [though not fully discovered yet], amputation, etc.). The developments of barbed wire, submarines, planes & bombing, and gas chemicals (chlorine and mustard gas) as well as the technique of trench warfare made WWI a war that was difficult to win (stalemates with trench warfare) and devastating on either side, ultimately leading to the death of tens of millions of people.

B) One major cause of the First World War was rising nationalism among groups of people who felt that they were not being represented by their people. The Austro-Hungarian empire was a multi-ethnic empire, and rising nationalism from groups such as the Serbians led to the Serbian nationalist terrorist group, The Black Hand, to organize the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. After Gavrilo Princip assassinated Archduke Ferdinand, Germany expressed its support for Austria, Russia expressed its support for Serbia, and WWI began (partially also because of the intricate alliance system that had been established between European nations).

C) One way in which the First World War contributed to changes in European politics in the interwar period (1919 to 1939) was the results of the Treaty of Versailles, which ended WWI. The Treaty of Versailles punished Germany for its role in the war and required it to demilitarize, pay reparations, and take blame for the start of the war. This led to a feeling of resentment being held by Germans toward Western European nations, as well as major economic problems that Germany suffered from, like, for example, inflation. Other problems that occurred in this time period, such as the Great Depression and the Age of Anxiety, led to the people desiring someone to take charge and control of the nation and to fix all their problems. This allowed for the rise of fascism in nations like Italy and Germany, with totalitarian authoritative political leaders like Mussolini and Adolf Hitler taking control during the interwar period of 1919-1939 and eventually leading to the start of WWII.

Sample B

Sample 4B:

A major characteristic of the First World War was trench warfare. Trench warfare was a new warfare tactic in which, rather than lining up perpendicular to each other and letting off rounds until one side retreats, each side would dig trenches in the ground from which troops would fire at each other from behind cover. This would drag out the war by creating long term battles of attrition that would last months, maybe years at a time.

The main cause for the first world war was the ally system, without it the war would simply have been between Austria-Hungary and Serbia. However; due to this system, Russia stepped in to help Serbia while Germany stepped in to help Austria-Hungary. From there many other countries became involved due to a chain reaction of sorts as when a country would become involved so would their allies, and that countries allies, and so on and so forth.

Due to the ally system in WWI that made the war so much larger, it was decided that no official alliances would be made amongst sovereign nations so as to avoid another large scale war like WWI.

Sample C

Sample 4C:

One major characteristic of the first World War was the development of new technologies and mechanisms such as the tank. During World War One many weapons and tools that had not been available or not existed before were becoming widespread causing more threatening attacks. Examples of those used in World War One specifically were the tank, the atomic bomb, the machine gun, etc. There were also trench holes to be used as protection and cover during combat.

One major cause of the first World War was the conflicts between countries's territory during trade and exporation of goods. Many countries had certain limitations built around where outsiders were allowed to have access to, and this caused a lot of difficulty during the time of industrialization.

One way that the first World War contributed to changes in European politics in the interwar period of 1919 to 1939 was the countries that had now built trusted allies within eachother, and the regions that had no allies and were being targeted against. During World War One communication of countries increased expanding powers and preventive measures of enemies.

Short Answer Question 4

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

Overview

Responses to part (a) of the prompt were expected to offer a minimally accurate description of one major characteristic of the First World War. Acceptable responses were expected to have a historically defensible description of a major characteristic of the First World War.

Responses to part (b) were expected to offer an accurate explanation of one major cause of the First World War. Acceptable responses were expected to have a historically defensible explanation of how one condition or event led to the outbreak of the First World War.

Responses to part (c) of the prompt were expected to offer an accurate explanation of one way in which the First World War contributed to political changes in European politics between 1919 and 1939. Acceptable responses were expected to have a historically defensible explanation of how the First World War led to a political change during the interwar period.

Sample: 4A

Score: 3

The response earned the point for part (a) because of the detailed description of new technologies and the resulting deaths of millions.

The response earned the point for part (b) for the explanation of nationalism driving the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand followed by the mention of the intricate alliance system.

The response earned the point for part (c) for explaining the impact of the Treaty of Versailles on Germany which led to the rise of fascism.

Sample: 4B

Score: 2

The response earned the point for part (a) because of the description of trench warfare leading to long battles of attrition.

The response earned the point for part (b) for explaining the conflict between Serbia and Austria-Hungary being spread to other countries because of the alliance system.

The response did not earn the point for part (c) because it provided an inaccurate description of interwar diplomacy and did not explain a change in politics.

Short Answer Question 4 (continued)

Sample: 4C

Score: 1

The response earned the point for part (a) because of the description of tanks, machine guns, and trench warfare. The chronological error regarding the atomic bomb did not count against the response since it offered several correct examples of new military technology.

The response did not earn the point for part (b) because the attempted explanation of trade conflicts leading to the war was overly generalized.

The response did not earn the point for part (c) because the attempted explanation of alliances and diplomacy in the interwar period was garbled and overgeneralized.