



“ETS”
Embrace the Standards

- 2008 APUSH Reading

Content of APUSH Exam

This section will give you a brief overview of the exam's content. The APUSH Exam expects that the student will have some knowledge of the entirety of US history, beginning with the Age of Discovery to the present day, however the majority of the test will assess your knowledge of the 19th and 20th centuries. The multiple choice section and essays cover the major areas of historical study.

The make-up of the APUSH Exam is as follows:

- Section I, Part A – 55 Multiple Choice Questions
- Section I, Part B – 3 Short Answer Questions
 - Question 1 and 2 are both required; either question 3 or 4 is required
- Section II, Part A – 1 Document Based Question
- Section II, Part B – 1 of either 2 or 3 Long Essay Questions

Multiple Choice Section

The College Board reports the following breakdown of multiple choice questions:

- Approximately 5% of the questions are from Pre-Columbus to Jamestown (1491-1607)
- Approximately 45% of the questions are from Jamestown to the End of Reconstruction (1607-1877)
- Approximately 45% of the questions are from the Civil War to the Reagan Revolution (1865-1980)
- Approximately 5% of the questions are from the Reagan Revolution to the Present...(1980-2035)

The multiple choice section consists of 55 multiple choice questions that are organized into sets of between two to five questions. The question in each set ask students to respond to a primary or secondary source, such as written texts, images, charts, graphs or maps, reflecting the types of material that historians use in studying the past. Multiple choice questions assess students' ability to reason about the source material in tandem with their knowledge of content required by the course. The possible answers for a multiple choice question reflect the level of detail present in the required historical developments found in the APUSH outline of the course. While a set may focus on one particular period of U.S. history, the individual questions within that set may ask students to make connections to thematically linked developments in other periods. Below are sample questions for each of the type of multiple choice of questions that will be encountered.

Written (Primary or Secondary) Source Stimulus Questions

“And it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that...no sugars, tobacco, cotton-wool, indigo, ginger, fustic or other dying wood, of growth, production, or manufacture of any *English* plantations in *America, Asia, or Africa*, shall be shipped, carried conveyed or transported, from any of the said *English* plantations to any land, island, territory, dominion, port or place whatsoever, other than to such other *English* plantations as do belong to his Majesty...under the

penalty of the forfeiture of said goods, or the full value thereof, and also the ship, with all her guns, tackle, apparel, ammunition and furniture.”

The Navigation Act of 1660

1. The policies stated in the above law can best be seen as an example of
 (A) Enlightenment thinking.
 (B) capitalism.
 (C) communism.
(D) mercantilism.
2. What accounts most for the scant success of the above law in modifying English colonial behavior in North America?
 (A) Weak economic growth and the lack of external competition
(B) Decades of the British government’s relative indifference to colonial governance
 (C) The presence of slavery and growing colonial wars
 (D) The rejection of Anglicanism in the colonies
3. After the Seven Years’ War, Britain shifted its position on imperial regulations to
 (A) promote greater colonial migration to the West.
 (B) find ways to safeguard its borders and maintain neutral trading rights.
(C) alleviate its massive debt from the war.
 (D) end trading, commerce, and negotiations with American Indians.

Image Stimulus Questions



4. The sentiments such as those depicted in the cartoon above most directly contributed to which of the following?

- (A) **Breakdown in trust between sectional leaders**
- (B) The willingness of abolitionists to use violence to achieve their goals
- (C) Repeated attempts at political compromise
- (D) The secession of Southern states

5. Which group was most likely the intended audience of the cartoon above?

- (A) White Americans in the South
- (B) State governments in the North
- (C) **Members of the Republican Party**
- (D) Voluntary organizations promoting religious and secular reforms

6. The cartoon above is best understood in the context of the

- (A) North's increasing reliance on a free-labor manufacturing economy.
- (B) **variety of proposals leaders made that ultimately failed to reduce sectional conflict.**
- (C) willingness of abolitionists to use violence to achieve their goals.
- (D) weakening of loyalties to the two major parties.

Chart/Graph/Map Stimulus Question

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SPENDING, 1960–1968 (in billions of dollars)

Fiscal Year	National Defense	Social Services	Other	Total Spending
1960	48.1	26.2	17.9	92.2
1961	49.6	29.8	18.3	97.7
1962	52.3	31.6	22.9	106.8
1963	53.4	33.5	24.4	111.3
1964	54.8	35.3	28.4	118.5
1965	50.6	36.6	31.0	118.2
1966	58.1	43.3	33.1	134.5
1967	71.4	51.3	34.8	157.5
1968	81.9	59.4	36.8	178.1

7. The overall pattern of spending in the table most directly reflects which of the following federal policy positions at the time?

- (A) Alleviating poverty requires federal government regulation of lifestyles and morality.

(B) Federal power should be used to both aid United States citizens and fight communism abroad.

(C) Federal power should be checked by state and local government initiatives.

(D) National defense must be achieved above all other considerations.

8. The pattern in spending for national defense shown in the table most directly reflects which of the following?

(A) A decisive loss for the United States in the Korean War

(B) Democratic Party dominance in national politics after 1968

(C) Increased public confidence in the United States government

(D) Efforts to contain communism in Southeast Asia

9. Which of the following developments after the Second World War most directly enabled the total spending shown in the table?

(A) Significant increases in immigration that transformed fiscal policy

(B) Rising general prosperity and an expanding middle class

(C) The conspicuous consumption of the baby-boom generation

(D) The economic impact of declining northern industrial cities

10. The pattern of social services spending in the table is most similar to which of the following spending patterns in other historical periods?

(A) Appropriations to create a national banking system in the 1840s and 1850s

(B) Assistance to American Indians at the end of the 1800s

(C) Attempts to deal with the effects of the Great Depression in the 1930s

(D) Funding for conservation efforts during the early 1900s

Strategies for Multiple Choice Questions

1. Go with your first feeling. Studies have shown that your initial response is likely to have a better chance of being correct than if you go back and change your answer. However, if you reexamine the response and note you have made a mistake in reading the question, certainly do change your answer.

2. If you have no clear idea about the question, do not answer it right away. Leave it blank, carefully making a note on your scantron and test booklet, but be very careful. You must make sure you are filling in the correct blank on the scantron sheet for the next question.

3. Watch your test questions and answer sheet. Check every document question set that the question number you are answering is the same number on your answer document. This is especially important when you skip a question to come back to.

Every year the readers bring at least one story of their students reaching question 55 on the test booklet and number 54 on the answer sheet!

4. Focus on the entire test. The test feels like it gets more difficult as it goes on. Several things may be hitting you at the same time. Your adrenaline is just wearing off or the room is just getting warmer from body heat and lack of sleep is hitting your brain. Do not allow yourself to fade as you get to the latter part of the test. Studies show that the percentage of correct answers lowers dramatically after question 40. Close your eyes for a few seconds and breathe deeply. Concentrate on finishing strong.

The Written Sections – Short Answer Questions

The three short answers that you must write will be balanced from the time periods as well. Students are required to answer the first and second questions and then answer either the third or the fourth question. The reasoning skill set up for the short answers are as follows:

- The 1st question primarily assesses the practice of analyzing secondary sources, asking students to respond in writing to a historian's argument. This question will cover the French and Indian War to the Reagan Revolution (1754-1980).
- The 2nd question primarily assesses either the skill of causation or comparison, and ask students to respond in writing to a primary source (written text) or to a visual source (image, map, or chart). This question will cover the French and Indian War to the Reagan Revolution (1754-1980).
- Students choose to answer either the 3rd or 4th question. These questions ask students to respond in writing to general propositions about U.S. history and will primarily assess the same skill, either causation, comparison, continuity and change, or contextualization as question #2. Question #4 will assess a different skill than question #2 and #3. Question #3 and #4 may not have a stimulus. Question 3 will cover the Pre-Columbian Era to the End of Reconstruction (1491-1877). Question 4 will cover the End of the Civil War to Present (1865-2035).

The Written Sections – Document Based Essay

It is not likely that the document based essay will come from the post 1980's (Period 9). The 1980s might be included as only part of a question. Here is an example: "The scandals of the various presidential administrations have greatly affected the success of those administrations. Assess the validity of this statement using three of the following presidents: Grant, Harding, Nixon and Reagan." Note that Reagan is from the 1980s but he is just part of this question. This question will focus on topics between the French and Indian War to the Reagan Revolution (1754-1980).

Strategies for Document Based Questions

1. You are likely to write more pages for your DBQ than for your long essay question. You will write more because you have all of the documents to respond to and incorporate into your answer. When you open up your green test booklet (which contains the question and all the documents), you should read and plan

the essay for a period of 10-15 minutes. Most students skip the planning phase and thus miss easy, key points on the essay (outside evidence). It is the pink booklet that is sent to be graded by readers.

2. Planning Phase: When looking at the question for the DBQ, do not look at the documents yet. Write down as many names, events and concrete details that you can think of pertaining to the question. Only after doing this, look at the documents and prepare your response. This will help you avoid becoming so focused on the documents themselves that you forget that you must have outside factual evidence as well. The successful DBQ balances outside evidence with analysis of the documents.
3. Be organized in your writing. Give a brief statement or two about the context of the question using specific evidence. Start with a strong thesis statement that answers the question. Tie your outside facts and documents to your thesis statement. Use transitional phrases to move from one paragraph to the next. Thus, if the question asks about economic, social and political issues, beginning one paragraph with "In the area of economics..." and in the next with "Social issues were..." lets the reader know where you are going.
4. Use all of the documents in your essay. If there are 7 documents make sure you have used all 7 documents. Note how H.I.P.P (**H**istorical Context, **I**ntended Audience, author's **P**oint of View or **P**urpose) each document is.
5. Do not forget to reference documents so that the reader knows which one you are using. This can be done in two ways. Either describe the document used, "The Seneca Falls Convention was an important beginning to the women's rights movement" or reference it as a document, "The Seneca Falls Convention, (Doc E) was an important beginning to the women's rights movement." DO NOT write "In document E..."
6. Do not quote from the documents. The reader does not want to hear Jefferson's words from the Declaration of Independence. The reader wants to hear your voice. Put the information from the documents in your own words.
7. If you find a document that does not seem to prove your thesis, and you think you can refute the document's validity, then certainly do that. The readers love students who go beyond the usual answers. If you do not understand a document, still try to use it at the end of the body of your essay.
8. Analysis goes a long way in enhancing your score. Answer the question "Why?" as you write your essay. Many students merely list a multitude of facts or documents without any depth. Those kinds of responses will be scored lower than the essay that uses far fewer facts but explains them well with analysis.

9. In your conclusion, add synthesis to your essay. Either modify your thesis, account for contradictory evidence, connect the topic to another time period or geographical area or connect it to the another field of history. Restate your thesis if you have not modified it.
10. Watch the time. Stop after one hour. That means after the 10-15 minute planning phase and 45 minutes of writing the essay, stop. Remember, you can always come back after you have finished your free long essay question.
11. Make your handwriting as legible as you can. This should have been practiced during the school year. Although the readers will try to read a messy essay, they can not give you credit for ideas they can not read.
12. Make your essay reader friendly. The reader of your essay may have read over a thousand essays by the time they get to yours. Make it easy for them by writing neatly, having a careful thesis, organize well and tie everything back to the thesis statement (sledge hammer/Thor statement). Last of all and most importantly underline your thesis statement. This way you are sure you have a thesis statement and the reader has an easy time of identifying the thesis statement.

The Written Sections – Long Essay Question

The long essay question will be shorter than the document based question. It does not require the formulaic five paragraph essay. It can be three, four or even six paragraphs. However, you do need to write using paragraphs. Using paragraphs will show your organization more clearly and make the essay easier to understand.

Students will choose one of three long essays questions. Each question will deal with one of three time periods, Pre-Columbian to the Jeffersonian Revolution (1491-1800), the Jeffersonian Revolution to the Spanish American War (1800-1898) and American Imperialism to the Present (1890-2035). The three question options will all address the same theme and assess the same reasoning skill (causation, comparison, continuity and change over time)

Strategies for the Long Essay Question

1. The key to success with this essay is organization, evidence and using historical reasoning skills. Start with a good thesis, provide evidence and link the evidence to a historical reasoning skill.
2. Watch your time. The proctor may not tell you to move on from the document based essay to the long essay. Give yourself thirty minutes to write the long essay.
3. Remember you are an objective observer of a historical event. Do not use slang or personal pronouns and do not get emotional about the answer. Try to

understand the historical figure and his/her decisions by understanding the time in which they took place.

4. The readers understand when a student knows little or nothing about a topic. Many students throw out information that has no value and can be quickly rejected by the reader. Link your evidence to one of the historical reasoning skills we have practiced all year - contextualization, causation, comparison, continuity and change over time.
5. In your conclusion, add complexity to your essay. Either modify your thesis, account for contradictory evidence, connect the topic to another time period or geographical area or connect it to the another field of history. Restate your thesis if you have not modified it.
6. Remember you need to write both essays and all three short answers to get passing score.
7. The best preparation for this exam is reading and rereading your textbook and study guide book. Then when you go in to take the test, you will have confidence and it will not be the loneliest three and a half hours of your life.