

2023

AP[®]



AP[®] United States Government and Politics

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary Set 1

Inside:

Free-Response Question 2

- Scoring Guidelines**
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Question 2: Quantitative Analysis**4 points**

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- A.** Identify the form of political participation that saw the largest change between the 2018 and 2020 elections, as shown in the bar graph. **1 point**

Acceptable identifications include:

Donated money to a campaign

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- B.** Describe the difference in overall participation between the midterm and presidential elections, as shown in the bar graph. **1 point**

Acceptable descriptions include:

The data show that there was more political participation in the presidential election than in the midterm.

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- C.** Draw a conclusion about how linkage institutions might have contributed to the difference in political participation between the midterm and presidential elections, as shown in the bar graph. **1 point**

Acceptable conclusions include:

- Participation might have been weaker during the midterm election because there was less media coverage than in the presidential election.
- Participation might have been greater during the presidential election because interest groups provided more opportunities for youth involvement than during the midterm election.
- Participation might have been greater during the presidential election because political parties might have concentrated on getting out the youth vote more than during a midterm election.

NOTE: Acceptable responses do not need to identify a specific type of linkage institution.

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- D.** Explain how the different levels of political participation, as shown in the bar graph, might demonstrate the concept of political efficacy. **1 point**

Acceptable explanations include:

- If people believe that voting makes a difference, then they would be more likely to try to convince other people to vote.
- If people believe that midterm elections matter less than presidential elections, then they would be less likely to participate during a midterm election.
- If people believe that their government responds to the voices of the people, then they would be more likely to attend a march or demonstration than people who believe their government is not responsive.

Total for question 2 4 points

Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

A) The form of Political Participation that saw the largest change between 2018 and 2020 was donating money to a campaign, which saw a 21% increase.

B) The general trend of the graph is that among 18-24 year olds, more people participated in some way politically during a Presidential election, as seen in 2020, than during a midterm election, as seen in 2018.

C) Social media and media in general, popular among younger voters, could have played a major role in the increase in participation. Many media outlets use "horse-race journalism," or the use of exciting and sensationalized headlines about the current leader in an election, more during the Presidential election, as it usually comes down to only 2 major candidates. This increase in media spotlight on the Presidential election would then gain more attention of these voters, making them more likely to care about and vote during the election, increasing the participation of these voters.

D) Political Efficacy, or the belief your vote matters, is generally higher for Presidential elections, as it's more clear how who becomes president will impact this country. This increased belief would then lead more people to vote and participate, matching the results shown in the graph.

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Important: Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

~~A. The form of political participation that saw the largest change between the 2018 and 2020 elections is donating money to a campaign. The other participation forms have a difference of 10% to 17% from 2018 to 2020 while donating money has a difference of 21% from 2018 to 2020, making it the largest change.~~

~~B. The form of political participation that saw the largest change between the 2018 and 2020 elections is donating money to a campaign. The other participation forms have a difference of 10% to 17% from 2018 to 2020 while donating money has a difference of 21% from 2018 to 2020, making it the largest change.~~

B. The difference in overall participation between the midterm and presidential elections is the presidential elections consistently has a higher participation rate. All participation on the graph shows the gray bar for presidential elections, going further than the white bar for midterms.

C. Linkage institutions may have contributed to the difference in political participation between the midterm and presidential elections by boosting participation for the presidential election. Linkage institutions such as social media are used more heavily and are promoted more during presidential elections which in turn, influences more people and increases participation for presidential elections.

D. The different levels of political participation shown on the

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● **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

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Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

graph may demonstrate the concept of political efficacy because it shows how different people are able to participate in different ways. Political efficacy is how much you can do to participate in voting on politics, so the graph shows different ways people participate.

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● **Important:** Completely fill in the circle that corresponds to the question you are answering on this page.

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4



Begin your response to each question at the top of a new page. Do not skip lines.

- A. The form of participation that saw the biggest change between 2019 and 2020 was donating money to a campaign.
- B. In the 2020 presidential election, people were generally more engaged in political participation than they were in 2019.
- C. Linkage institutions were more prominent in 2020 in connecting citizens to the government which led to an increase in political participation.
- D. The different levels demonstrate political efficacy because they show that people are engaged politically and ~~want~~ want to make a change.

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Question 2

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

Overview

The Quantitative Analysis question called on students to read and interpret data related to the political participation of 18- to 24-year-olds in the 2018 and 2020 elections. First, students were expected to identify the most significant change over time in the data. Next, students were expected to describe the difference in overall participation between midterm and presidential elections using the data in the bar graph. Third, students were asked to draw a conclusion about how linkage institutions might have contributed to the difference in participation as demonstrated in the bar graph. Finally, this question challenged students to explain how the different levels of participation shown in the bar graph could demonstrate political efficacy.

Sample: 2A

Score: 4

The response earned 1 point in part A because it identifies, “The form of political participation that saw the largest change ... was donating money to a campaign.”

The response earned 1 point in part B because it describes, “The general trend of the graph is ... more people participated in some way politically during a presidential election, as seen in 2020, than during a midterm election.”

The response earned 1 point in part C because it explains how the action of the linkage institution (“increase in media spotlight”) affected participation in presidential elections (“making them more likely to care about and vote during the election, increasing the participation of these voters.”).

The response earned 1 point in part D because it explains, “Political Efficacy, or the belief your vote matters, is generally higher for presidential elections ... This increased belief would then lead more people to vote and participate.”

Sample: 2B

Score: 3

The response earned 1 point in part A because it identifies, “The form of political participation that saw the largest change ... is donating money to a campaign.”

The response earned 1 point in part B because it describes that “the presidential elections consistently has a higher participation rate. All participation on the graph shows the gray bar for presidential elections.”

The response earned 1 point in part C because it concludes, “Linkage institutions such as social media are used more heavily and are promoted more during presidential elections which in turn, influences more people and increases participation for presidential elections.”

Question 2 (continued)

The response did not earn a point in part D because it does not explain how the different levels of political participation might demonstrate the concept of political efficacy. The response does not accurately explain political efficacy or how it relates to different levels of participation.

Sample: 2C

Score: 2

The response earned 1 point in part A, because it identifies that “[t]he form of participation that saw the biggest change ... was donating money to a campaign.”

The response earned 1 point in part B because it describes that “[i]n the 2020 presidential election, people were generally more engaged in political participation than they were in 2018.” This is a sufficient description because it accurately describes the difference in overall participation between the midterm and presidential elections.

The response did not earn a point in part C, because while it does mention “[l]inkage institutions ... connecting citizens to the government” it does not demonstrate how linkage institutions might have contributed to the difference in political participation between the midterm and presidential elections.

The response did not earn a point in part D because while it does mention that “people are engaged politically and want to make a change,” it does not explain how political efficacy is related to the different levels of political participation.